# A Companion to Walter Burley

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# A Companion to Walter Burley

## Late Medieval Logician and Metaphysician

*Edited by*

Alessandro D. Conti




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*Cover illustration*: detail from the sculptured funerary monument of Giovanni da Legnano (1320–83), *Doctor utriusque iuris* of the University of Bologna. Courtesy of the Museo Civico Medievale of Bologna.

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# INTRODUCTION

Alessandro D. Conti

Until some 30 years ago, medieval scholars and historians of philosophy had not generally done justice to Walter Burley, or Burleigh (ca. 1275–after 1344). On the one hand, he was misconstrued as holding a mere variation of more moderate realist positions—something that is true only for the first part of his career (before 1324). On the other, very often Burley's ideas were studied simply as a means to arrive at a better understanding of Ockham's theories, so dwarfing the worth and interest of his doctrines. Yet in terms of rigor, originality, and influence, Burley, like Ockham himself, was one of the most prominent logicians and metaphysicians of the late Middle Ages. The current volume tries to rectify this situation. It aims: (1) to reconstruct Burley's thought and the role it played in the development of late medieval philosophy; (2) to situate it within its historical and intellectual context; and (3) to clarify its internal evolution.

Burley had a very long career both in England and in France, and produced a large body of works (more than 70), a number of which were very well known and utilized. His last commentaries on the *Physics* (Books I–VI, 1324–27, Books VII–VIII, 1334–37) and on the *Ars vetus* (1337), in particular, were studied all over Europe during the second half of the 14th century and throughout the 15th century. His activity is set in a very crucial period, when the diffusion of Ockham's theories caused a bitter conflict between the followers of the old realist view, such as Burley himself, and the supporters of the new nominalist way, such as Ockham and Buridan. Burley used all of his intellectual resources and authority in fighting against the new nominalist trend, and was the first author who tried to remove the aporetic points of the traditional realist theory of categories and universals, which Ockham had pointed out, through the use of a suitable strategy. As a consequence, his semantic and ontological convictions evolved over the years from an original version of the moderate realism inspired by 13th-century philosophers and theologians, such as Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, and Henry of Ghent, to the radical (and somehow Platonic) form of realism proper to his final theories, which posit:

1. The existence of extramental universals *really distinct* from their individuals, whereas, at the beginning of his career, he claimed that universals have being in individuals, as constitutive parts of their essence.

2. A *real distinction* among the ten (Aristotelian) categories, which he regarded as properly things—in contrast, at the start of his career he maintained that absolute categories (substance, quantity, and quality) alone are real things, whilst the other categories are simply *real aspects* of the three absolute ones.

3. The existence in the external world of *real propositions* which are what true sentences signify (see in particular the prologue to the last commentary on the *Categories*)—whereas in his youth he had taught that real propositions (*propositiones in re*) properly exist only in our mind as objects of its acts of judgement (*obiective*). It must be pointed out here that this is the most discussed point of Burley's philosophical system: as Laurent Cesalli explains in his chapter on meaning and truth, Joel Biard, Hans-Ulrich Wöhler, Christian Rode, and myself defend the thesis of a plurality of theories, whereas Alain de Libera, Stephan Meier-Oeser, and Cesalli himself think that Burley develops the same theoretical intuition from 1301 (the date of composition of his *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*) to 1337. Furthermore, the real proposition as described in the last commentary on the *Categories* is considered as a sort of complex, immanent, intentional object rather than an extramental state of affairs, or a fact, by Laurent Cesalli, while other scholars, such as Gabriel Nuchelmans, Biard, and Rode, reckon it as a kind of mixed entity, partly mental, partly extramental, and others, such as Jan Pinborg, de Libera, Meier-Oeser, and myself, think of it in terms of a state of affairs or a fact. According to Burley, these theses were necessary for a realism that would ground the validity of our knowledge of the world without falling prey to Ockham's critiques.

Twice during the course of his academic career, at the beginning and in the third decade of the 14th century, Burley worked out slightly different versions of the same semantic theory in connection with two partly divergent conceptions of reality. The first version (elaborated in the *Tractatus de suppositionibus, Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*, the middle commentaries on Aristotle's *Categories* and *De interpretatione*, and in the *Expositio libri De anima*) is somewhat less sophisticated than the second (elaborated in the *De puritate artis logicae, tractatus longior*, the last commentaries on the *Physics* and the *Ars vetus*, and the later *Tractatus de universalibus* and *Quaestiones octo super logicam in communi necnon super Porphyrii Isagogen*). Whereas in his early works Burley was able to differentiate in some way the intension/sense of an expression (in his words, the *quale quid*, namely the universal form signified by common terms) from its extension/reference (the *hoc aliquid*, namely the substantial

individuals instantiating that universal form), in the *De puritate artis logicae, tractatus longior* and in his last commentary on the *Ars vetus* he distinguishes between the sense (in Burley's words, *esse obiectum*, namely the mental universal existing in the mind as an object of understanding) and reference (*significatum*) of an expression, which in turn is now divided into its intension (the common nature signified by a general term, namely the universal form really existing *in* many individuals) and extension (the individuals named by the general term at issue, that is, the singulars in which that universal form comes to existence). In developing the ontology behind his first semantic system, Burley did not subscribe to the same theses that eventually came to characterize his radically realist ontology, but—as has already been said—different ones, consistent with the canons of moderate realism. On the other hand, Burley's general approach to philosophy does not differ from the one he took in his late maturity. It can be defined as analytical, since he believed that ontology must be developed in relation to the resolution of semantic problems, and that a philosophical explanation of reality must be preceded by a semantic explanation of the structure and function of our language, even if we can only give meaning to linguistic expressions by correlating them with objects in the world.

Burley's change of mind about the ontological status of universals, categories, and propositions was brought about by Ockham's critique of the traditional realist conception. The *Venerabilis Inceptor* had maintained that (1) the assumption of a relation of identity between universals and individuals was inconsistent with the standard definition of (real) identity, which implies transitivity in predication; (2) the only kind of distinction which holds between two creatural beings is the real one, as (in his opinion) any form of distinction between two creatural beings necessarily implies a real distinction between them; (3) particular substances and qualities have an extramental kind of existence, whereas the ten Aristotelian categories serve to classify mental, written, and spoken terms, but not things outside the mind. From the first two theses and the (assumed) truth of Aristotle's statement that there cannot be real universal forms apart from their individuals, he had derived a rejection of any type of extramental reality for universals.

The crucial point of Ockham's attack on the traditional realist ontology is the demonstration of the thesis that the only kind of distinction which could hold between two creatural beings is the real one. In effect, the idea that real universal forms cannot exist apart from their individuals was a sort of undisputed dogma for the realists of his times, and that a relation

of identity between universals and individuals was inconsistent with the standard definition of identity was recognized to be true by moderate realists too. They had tried to avoid that internal contradiction by introducing some form of distinction between universals and individuals considered as second intentions. A common topic in the explanation of *Categories* 3, 1b10–15, was that one cannot infer from "Socrates is a man" and "man is a species" that "Socrates is a species", notwithstanding the identity between *homo* and Socrates. Still, in their opinion, the thesis of the identity of universals and individuals was necessary in order to justify the division of predication into essential and accidental, and the difference between substantial and accidental forms, stated by Aristotle in the *Categories* (2, 1a20–1b5; 5, 2a18–33, 3b17–21). Like accidental forms, universal substantial forms are present in singular substances and cannot exist without them; so, if they, unlike accidental forms, had not been somehow identical with singular substances, as constitutive parts of their essence, then they would have been indistinguishable from accidents. As a consequence, moderate realists had been compelled to maintain identity between universals and individuals considered as first intention, but to weaken that same identity by limiting the transitivity of predication between them, since not all that was predicated of individuals could be predicated of universals and vice versa. In a certain way, the intentional distinction of Henry of Ghent and the formal distinction of Duns Scotus served as the vehicle for satisfying both these demands.

There is no sign in Burley's works prior to 1324 that he regarded Ockham as an opponent, but beginning with the prologue to his final commentary on the *Physics* (a work presumably rewritten in response to Ockham's criticisms), his main writings on logic and metaphysics always feature an analysis of Ockham's views together with a serious attempt to refute his arguments. Two facts prove clearly that Burley changed his mind because of his having come into contact with Ockham's works. First, the problem of universals is not even mentioned in his first commentaries on the *Physics* (before 1316), but it receives extensive treatment in the prologue of the last one, where he quotes, analyzes, and rejects arguments advanced by the *Venerabilis Inceptor*. Second, Burley's final commentaries on the *Physics* and the *Ars vetus* and the *Tractatus de universalibus* contain critiques of Ockham's views on universals, categories, and truth, as well as replies to his arguments against the standard moderate realist doctrine. As a matter of fact, like many other realist authors of his times, the *Doctor planus et perspicuus* was persuaded that Ockham's objections were sufficient to show that the traditional realist account of the relation between universals

and individuals was unacceptable, but not that realism as a whole was untenable. Thus, in response to Ockham's attack, he developed a new ontology based on a threefold *real* distinction: (1) between universals and individuals; (2) among the ten categories; and (3) between categorial items, or simple objects (*incomplexa*), and complex objects (*complexa*), or real propositions (*propositiones in re*). Actually, in his later writings Burley rejects any kind of distinction in addition to the real one, and therefore even that form of intentional distinction he had employed in his early works for clarifying the relations between genus and difference, and between essence and being. Like Robert Holcot, he seems to believe that Henry of Ghent's and Duns Scotus's strategies of drawing new forms of distinction, intermediate between the real distinction and the distinction of reason, do not work, since they imply a rejection of the standard definition of identity according to which two things are identical if, and only if, whatever is predicated of one is also predicated of the other.

The last two main theses of Burley's later ontology (a real distinction among the ten categories and the existence of a real proposition) depend on what he thought was necessary for preserving a realist view of universals. Because of his giving up of the intentional difference, Burley was compelled to make the ontological status of all the ten Aristotelian categories and of *propositiones in re* stronger than it was before. Thus in his last commentary on the *Categories* Burley had to maintain that (1) the division into categories is first of all a division of *res* existing outside the mind, and only secondarily of the mental concepts and spoken or written terms which signify them; and (2) things in one category are really distinct from those in others. It could not be otherwise: if universals and individuals belonging to the same category are really distinct between them, then that is all the more reason why items belonging to different categories are so. Furthermore, he polemicized against Ockham's strong reductionist position. Burley contends that Ockham's view on this subject is not only manifestly in contrast with the letter and the inner meaning of Aristotle's doctrine, but that it compromises the goal of any correct categorial theory, namely, the classifying and putting in hierarchical order of all the world items according to their peculiar modes of being and metaphysical structure and properties. He argues that, if Ockham were right, then all the items belonging to the ten Aristotelian categories would fall into the categorial field of quality alone—a patent absurdity. Were the division into categories exclusively a division of terms according to linguistic criteria, it would be impossible to reduce all the different kinds of simple expressions to ten alone.

Burley thought that only on the ground of a close isomorphism between mental language and the world could the signifying power of simple and complex expressions, the possibility of definitions, and consequently the validity of our knowledge, be accounted for and assured. As a consequence, after 1324 he developed a very rich and complex ontology. In his world, what is (or can be) signified by a proper name, like "Socrates", or by a definite description, such as "this man here", is the basic component of reality. Such *significata* are a sort of macro-objects, as they are aggregates made up of primary substances together with a host of substantial and accidental forms existing in them and through them. Primary substances and substantial and accidental forms are simple objects or categorial items, each possessing a unique, well-defined nature. These simple objects belong to one of ten main types or categories, each really distinct from the others. Although they are simple, some of these components are in a sense composite because they are reducible to something else—for example, primary substances are composed of a particular form (for example, in the case of men, the soul) and matter (in the case of men, the body). Primary substance differs from the other components of a macro-object because of its peculiar mode of being as an autonomous and independently existing object—in contrast to the other categorial items, which necessarily presuppose it for their existence. Primary substances are therefore substrates of existence and predication in relation to everything else. The distinction between substantial and accidental forms derives from their different relations to primary substances. Those universal forms which disclose the inner natures of particular substances (*forma declarans quidditatem*) are secondary substances. By contrast, those forms that simply affect primary substances without being actually joined to their natures are accidental forms. In Burley's words, the forms in relation to which particular substances are the *supposita* are substantial forms (or secondary substances), whereas those forms in relation to which particular substances are the *subiecta* are accidental forms. As a result, the macro-object is not simply a primary substance but an orderly collection of categorial items, so that primary substance, even though it is the most important element, does not contain the whole being of the macro-object. Complex objects (i.e. the real propositions) are definite aspects of macro-objects, since any *propositio in re* is the union of two forms of a macro-object (one of which must be substantial) with and by means of its primary substance. This is trivially true not only for real propositions such as *hominem esse animal* (man being an animal) but also for real propositions like *Sortem esse album* (Socrates being white) and *Sortem esse hominem* (Socrates being

a man). In the first case, the two forms connected are those of humanity and animality, and what unites them is each individual substance which plays the role of *suppositum* in relation to both of them. In the second case, the two forms involved are the *forma perficiens materiam* of Socrates (namely, his soul) and his whiteness, and what joins them is Socrates's primary substance, which has the soul as a (meta)physical component, and is the substrate of inherence (*subiectum*) of the accidental form of whiteness. In the last case, the two forms linked together are the *forma perficiens materiam* of Socrates and the correlated *forma declarans quidditatem* (the form of humanity): they are really distinct from each other, but tied together in Socrates's primary substance.

Two main difficulties arise from Burley's ontology of the macro-objects in relation to the standard Aristotelian background commonly accepted in the 13th and 14th centuries: (1) It is not easy to distinguish between essential and accidental predication, since secondary substances (namely, the universal forms of the category of substance) necessarily presuppose primary substances for their existence in the same way as accidental forms do. Thereby, their relation to primary substances is virtually the same as that which is peculiar to accidental forms: a sort of inherence. (2) Universals have their own being apart from the being of their individuals (even though they do not have an independent way of existence)—a conclusion dangerously close to Plato's thesis on that subject. Hence many late medieval realists (in particular John Wyclif, the so-called "Oxford Realists", and Paul of Venice as well) tried another way of replying to Ockham's charges, developing a philosophical paradigm intermediate between those of the moderate realists of the 13th century on the one side, and of Walter Burley on the other. They revised the notions of identity and distinction to make room for the distinctive relation of partial identity and difference that they claimed to hold between universals and individuals; and elaborated a sort of intensional—so to speak—logic where the main relation between beings was that of formal distinction, intended as the measure of the coincidence of the metaphysical components of two *res*. So, although an influential thinker, Burley did not point to the strategy that the realists of the end of the Middle Ages were to adopt. On the contrary, he clarified the only other possible way of escaping the contradictions Ockham had described, and analyzed all its presuppositions and consequences. Thus, in a certain way, he stated the uttermost limits within which the other medieval realists chose to remain.

* * *

Here there are 13 substantial chapters on major themes and problems pertaining to Burley's life, works, and legacy. The *Doctor planus et perspicuus* was first of all a (realist) logician and metaphysician (approximately three-quarters of his writings in one way or another deal with logic and metaphysics), then a natural philosopher, and finally a moral and political thinker. This classification gives us a realistic picture of the different degrees of novelty of Burley's theories and of his own personal interest in the various branches of philosophy. It also explains why the secondary literature on him is almost entirely dedicated to his logical and metaphysical thought. The volume aspires to make Burley better known and more widely studied and is intended to serve as an effective companion to university students and professors alike. Hence it offers a complete overview of his doctrines, even of those that are less original and innovative and consequently little studied. The essays, grounded in the most current secondary literature, have been arranged so as to constitute a sort of "polyphonous" monograph, whose chapters can be read independently of each other (and this fact explains why some topics are discussed at significant length in multiple chapters). They are grouped into four main sections: (1) Burley's intellectual development (Chapters One and Two, on Burley's life and works, and on the Ockham–Burley debate). (2) Burley the logician and metaphysician (the very core of the book—Chapter Three to Chapter Six, on meaning and truth, being and analogy, universals and individuals, and categories). (3) Burley the natural, moral, and political philosopher (Chapter Seven to Chapter Twelve, on knowledge, physical forms and matter, motion and time, generation and corruption, ethics, and politics). (4) Burley's legacy (Chapter Thirteen, on late medieval reactions to Burley). In the hope of offering to the reader a suitable map of the amount of scholarship devoted to Burley's views in each area and a solid understanding of the subject at hand, the chapters of the second section, like those of the general sections (namely the first and the last ones), range widely across Burley's many works, since each article focuses on a "family" of related (and largely studied) topics. On the contrary, the essays of the third section concerning Burley's natural philosophy are in most cases centered fundamentally on a single, general issue and use the treatment of that subject in one or two works as the basis of their discussion. Those concerning ethics and politics select a specific Aristotelian commentary and provide both a synopsis of it and an analysis of one or more particular themes within it. These differences in approaching the matter mirror the different status of our knowledge of the various aspects of Burley's thought, and at the same time try to fix a firm point of departure

for further investigations in those areas that were almost totally unexplored until now.

In the first chapter, Marta Vittorini presents us with a comprehensive and synthetic look at Burley's life, career, and writings, with special attention paid to the problems of authorship and dating. Her careful investigation and direct inspection of many among the extant manuscripts of Burley's *opus* allows her to give the reader a systematic exposition of Burley's works in their mutual relations. She also offers a vivid picture—and a fresh perspective—of Burley's intellectual training and development.

Catarina Dutilh Novaes writes on the Ockham–Burley dispute. As she notes, the development of Burley's doctrines can only be understood against the background of Ockham's critique of his earlier positions. Provoked by Ockham's arguments against the sort of moderate realism he endorsed in his earlier years, Burley underwent a radical revision of his own ideas, leading to an exacerbation of his realist views. As is well known, the divergences between them concerned mainly ontology and logic. All the most representative subjects debated by them are treated here: regarding ontology, the issues of universals and of the categories, and also the impact of their metaphysical disagreements on their respective physical doctrines. As for logic, the notions of signification, supposition, and consequence. Very opportunely, in order to outline the fundamentally dialectical nature of these disputes, Dutilh Novaes concentrates not only on the different views held but more specifically on the arguments and counterarguments put forward by each author against the positions held by the other. The core of the Burley–Ockham dispute is really their divergence concerning the ontological status of universals. More specifically, Ockham's criticism of the moderate realism led Burley to revise his positions and to formulate a more extreme form of realism concerning universals. It is in relation to universals that their respective central assumptions—Ockham's denial and Burley's endorsement of a structural isomorphism between language, thought, and reality—is most acutely felt.

Laurent Cesalli examines Burley's realistic view on logic, according to which it is not, as nominalists claimed, a mere science of language, but always possesses an ontological import, since the logical structures present in thought and expressed by language reflect relations between things in the (nonlinguistic) world. Cesalli focuses his attention mainly on Burley's theories of meaning and truth. He addresses the question of meaning and truth in Burley according to a threefold perspective: the notion of logic and its objects; the semantics of terms; and the semantics of propositions.

Cesalli draws three interesting conclusions in relation to the subject he deals with: (1) It is clear that logic, as Burley conceives of it, is intimately related to metaphysics; his conception of the objects of logic as things of second intentions is an unmistakable sign for that, as well as his conception of signification and supposition. Nonetheless, this does not prevent Burley from developing a highly formal logic, as exemplified by his theory of consequences. (2) The semantics of names is not explained in epistemic terms, but in terms of ontology. According to Burley, common names, like "man", apply to many individuals at once, as each man has his, or her, humanity as a metaphysical part of his, or her, whole being. (3) Finally, Burley's conception of truth as directional adequation—*adaequatio X ad Y* and not *adaequatio X et Y*—allows for a clear articulation of ontological and logical truth.

Jennifer Ashworth has written a wide-ranging treatment of Burley's theory of being and analogy. Her chapter begins with a survey of the sources in which Burley's views are expressed, and a close consideration of some basic notions in the medieval theory of language, including analogy, signification, and metaphor. Next Ashworth discusses the standard divisions of equivocation and how these related to both analogy and metaphor in Burley's writings, and finally, how Burley deals with *ens*, first from the point of view of semantics, and then from the point of view of metaphysics. Ashworth shows us that Burley was at once a product of a long tradition and an original thinker. Indeed, he was part of a movement, begun in the later 13th century, which explicitly opposed semantic analogy to metaphysical analogy. His chief thesis was that the word "being" corresponds to a single analogical concept. This entails that the relations between God and creatures, substance and accident, were described as analogical. Yet Burley retained the link between semantic analogy and metaphysical analogy, for he thought that our words and our concepts mirror the world.

Hans-Ulrich Wöhler proposes an analysis of Burley's theory of universals and individuals from the first formulation in the earlier works to the final version in the *Tractatus de universalibus*. Not only does Wöhler show how Burley's thought evolved during this time from a moderate to a radical form of realism, he also pays special attention to the problem of the relationship among substantial individuals, substantial universals, and accidents. In Burley's ontology, singular substances, the primary beings, are constituted by individual matter and form, and are the bearers of two different kinds of properties, the accidental forms and the universal substantial forms, or secondary substances. The latter express the immutable essences in the being of concrete individuals, whereas accidental forms

determine external supplementary and contingent properties. Universal substantial forms thus express the invariable condition of being proper to the various types of individuals. In his last commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*, Burley clearly assigns to singular substances the characteristic feature of being the unchangeable bearers of opposite properties in any process of transformation. Only in a secondary and indirect sense can this important function proper to the primary substances be attributed also to the secondary substances. Therefore, singular substances appear to be the core of Burley's metaphysical world, the very condition for the existence (namely the actual being, not simply the being) of anything else.

In the chapter on Burley's theories of categories a systematic and comparative exposition of Burley's two slightly different doctrines of categories is offered. In the first section of the chapter, Burley's two different general positions on the table of categories are outlined. The second section deals with Burley's ideas about substance. The third section expounds his central theses on the nature, reality, and mutual distinctions of the three main kinds of accidents: quantity, quality, and relation. Finally, some conclusions are drawn about the significance of Burley's last version of the theory of the categories. It certainly is an interesting example of that partial dissolution of the traditional doctrine which took place in the later Middle Ages. Within Burley's system, the ontological status of secondary substances and the relationships between primary and secondary substances, and between substances and accidents, are quite different from their Aristotelian originals, as Burley seems to recognize a single ontological pattern, modeled on inherence, as the basis of every kind of predicative relation.

The next essay deals with Burley's two slightly different theories of knowledge. In fact, for doing away with the peculiar problems of the realist paradigm of knowledge, the *Doctor planus et perspicuus* worked out two different accounts of the standard realist theory, somehow critical of the most common solutions proper to it. His first version is that developed in his commentary on Aristotle's *De anima* (before 1316); the second one is that expounded in the prologue of his last commentary on the *Physics* (ca. 1324). In the commentary on the *De anima*, Burley admits the intellect to be able to grasp material singulars, but, as there he was faithful to the main principles of Aristotelian gnoseology, he denies that the singular is the proper, direct, and adequate object of human knowledge, since singulars are known simply as items belonging to a certain species (in other words, occurrences of a certain type). On the contrary, in the last commentary on the *Physics*, he maintained that our intellect is capable

of knowing singulars *qua* singulars directly, whereas that which is more universal can be grasped by the intellect indirectly and by reflection—an openly anti-Averroistic statement. This "reevaluation" of the singular as possible object of knowledge was prepared and logically required by that turn in ontology which precisely in the last commentary on the *Physics* was taking place: the passage from an ontology developed according to the canons of moderate realism to the radically realist ontology of the macro-objects, centered over the real distinction between universals and singulars and among the ten Aristotelian categories.

Elżbieta Jung writes on matter and physical forms in Burley—a sort of short introduction to his philosophy of nature. She places Burley's conceptions of matter, form, and change squarely within the Aristotelian tradition of the late Middle Ages. Jung notes that Burley had never changed his concept of prime matter, and was faithful to Aristotle and Averroes on this subject, as he thought that prime matter does not suffer from generation and corruption, and is the unchanging substrate of any kind of form. *Qua* subject of generation, prime matter is a potential principle, since it actually exists only as a part of a composite substance. On the contrary, his theory of form and that of change (in particular, his treatment of the problem of the intension and remission of the accidental forms) testify to his originality, since he explains all substantial and accidental changes only by means of qualities and their actions.

Cecilia Trifogli investigates Burley's realist conception of motion and time, focusing in particular on Burley's critique of Ockham's position. Burley argues against the *Venerabilis Inceptor* that in the world there are successive things really distinct from permanent things and that motion and time are successive things. Motion is a successive thing belonging to the category of passion. It inheres in the mobile body, while it changes as a quasi-form, that is, as something playing the role of formal cause of that given change. Time is a successive thing really distinct from motion. It properly is a quantity whose subject of inherence is the motion itself, and that accounts for the property of motion of being successive. According to Burley, while motion and time are both successive things, succession primarily belongs to time and secondarily to motion, since motion is a successive thing in virtue of time.

Marek Gensler considers Burley's commentary on the *De generatione et corruptione*. The essay begins with a discussion of the problems of authenticity and dating of the work. The second section deals with the structure of the commentary. Finally, the main themes faced up to in it are analyzed. Gensler devotes a substantial part of this section to a close

examination of Burley's ideas about qualitative and quantitative changes. His conclusion is that many of Burley's theories in the *De generatione et corruptione* commentary are not original. An example of this is his view on the status of elements *in mixtione* and the *qualitas mixta* of a composite body, which agrees with Thomas Aquinas's opinion. The *Doctor planus et perspicuus*, however, demonstrates his skill as a philosopher in the analysis of growth, where he presents a new solution different from both the Aristotelian doctrine and Averroes's interpretation.

Iacopo Costa provides us with the first comprehensive and synthetic study on Burley's commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Costa begins by considering the question of the composition and structure of the work. Then he deals with the problem of the sources of the commentary, analyzing in particular the relationship with Grosseteste's *Notulae* and with Aquinas's own commentary. The latter is definitely the most important source of Burley, despite the small number of explicit quotations. Although in some cases Burley rejects Thomas's explanation of Aristotle's text, it is evident that Burley's commentary is a Thomistic commentary on the *Ethics*. Finally, Costa discusses some relevant topics, such as human happiness, universal good, cardinal and heroic virtues, the subject of moral virtue, and the voluntary action. The copious and precise documentation supplied makes it clear that (1) Burley's intention was to provide a purely philosophical commentary, since theological problems are almost completely absent; (2) Burley's commentary is not an original work, since it heavily relies on Aquinas's corresponding commentary not only in the *expositio litterae*, but also in some main doctrinal problems; and (3) it is an "antiquated" commentary, as Burley does not seem to know the various post-Thomistic developments of the *scientia moralis*.

Roberto Lambertini offers a fresh perspective on Burley's political theory. He presents the first systematic exposition of Burley's commentary on the *Politics*, a still unedited work, and an exhaustive discussion of the secondary literature. After having summarized the results of contemporary scholarship in the first section of the chapter, Lambertini focuses on those features of the commentary that might have attracted medieval readers, and on the peculiarities that can puzzle contemporary scholars, in order to show the importance of further study on this commentary. Manuscript evidence clearly shows that the English master reached a wide audience in the Middle Ages—it was handed down to us in many more copies than Albert's or Aquinas's commentaries on the same Aristotelian text. Nevertheless, Burley's *Expositio* is not an original work in the strictest sense of the term. It should rather be read in a tradition, and especially

on the background of the so-called Aquinas–Peter of Auvergne commentary, which has been identified as its main source. Lambertini helps us to appreciate Burley's text by comparing it methodically with its model, evaluating changes and shifts in structure and content. Only against this background do its peculiarities and originality become visible. As Lambertini writes: "Burley's own work, with his remarkable diffusion, contributed to the development of the medieval Aristotelian political language, which was one of the constituents of political theory in the last decades of the later Middle Ages."

Finally, Fabrizio Amerini concentrates on the 14th-century replies to Burley's thought, and especially to his logic and metaphysics. He examines analytically the reactions (1) to Burley's realist interpretation of the *Categories*; (2) to his idea that real propositions exist outside the mind *qua* references of the linguistic affirmative and true sentences; and (3) to his account of the nature and division of supposition, which strongly depends on his solution to the problem of universals. As far as the medieval authors studied are concerned, Amerini pays particular attention to Buridan, the Italian Dominican Franciscus de Prato, the Spanish Dominican Vincent Ferrer, and Paul of Venice. Amerini's accurate investigation also sheds new light on the question of Burley's "exaggerated" form of realism: as he makes clear, although Burley introduced in the debate on universals many original arguments, and supported the thesis of a real distinction between universals and individuals, his subtle distinctions were quickly lost. As a consequence, he was portrayed by thinkers in the late 14th and 15th centuries as the major advocate (together with Scotus) of a naive, more or less Platonic, realism in philosophy—as is the case, for instance, with Paul of Venice, in his commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge*. However, as Amerini remarks, Burley differentiated his position from the Platonic one and finally seemed to prefer reconnecting himself to the philosophical tradition of realism deriving from Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas rather than to that ensuing from Scotus or, worst, Plato. This sort of misunderstanding of Burley's original positions by the other philosophers of the late Middle Ages explains why at Paris, where the "linguistic" philosophy of John Buridan was dominant, the fortune of Burley was more limited, while at Oxford and in Italy Burley's philosophy received a warmer welcome.

# PART ONE

# THE INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER ONE

# LIFE AND WORKS

Marta Vittorini

Walter Burley, or Burleigh, according to another spelling, was a celebrated logician and eminent philosopher in his own time and throughout the 14th and 15th centuries.[1] His last commentary on the *Ars vetus*,[2] preserved in over 60 manuscripts and at least 13 old editions, was well known throughout the European universities until the first decades of the 16th century, and late medieval debates on the issues of the new physics had to consider his last commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*[3] and his works on *the first and last instant of change* and on the *latitude of the forms*, since Burley introduced new issues into the discussion.[4] Throughout his life he remained faithful to realism, elaborating a realist view that later on, after 1324, he developed in an original way, in order to respond to Ockham's criticism.[5] While during his whole career, Burley's main intellectual interest appears to have lain in logic, ontology, and physics, in the very last years he was also engaged

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[1] He was an influential author, an *auctoritas*, for at least two centuries after his death—see Chapter Thirteen below, 377–409.

[2] The *Expositio super Artem Veterem Porphyrii et Aristotelis*, written in 1337—see below, 43–44.

[3] See J. Ottman and R. Wood, "Walter Burley: His Life and Works," *Vivarium* 37 (1999), 1–23, at 2.

[4] See E. Jung-Palczewska, "Le problème d'averroïsme de Walter Burley dans son commentaire sur la *Physique*," *Studia mediewistyczne* 24.2 (1986), 101–09, in particular 109.

[5] On the endless polemics between Ockham and Burley see P.V. Spade, "Some Epistemological Implications of the Burley–Ockham Dispute," *Franciscan Studies* 35 (1975), 212–22; R. Wood, "Willing Wickedly: Ockham and Burley Compared," *Vivarium* 37 (1999), 72–93; A.D. Conti, "Ockham and Burley on Categories and Universals: a Comparison," *The Modern Schoolman* 86.1–2 (2008–09), 181–210; and, for a general picture, Chapter Two below, 49–84. On Burley's realism see A.D. Conti, "Ontology in Walter Burley's Last Commentary on the *Ars vetus*," *Franciscan Studies* 50 (1990), 121–76; E. Karger, "Walter Burley's Realism," *Vivarium* 37 (1999), 24–40; Conti, "Significato e verità in Walter Burley," *Documenti e Studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 11 (2000), 317–50; and L. Cesalli, *Le réalisme propositionnel. Sémantique et ontologie des propositions chez Jean Duns Scot, Gauthier Burley, Richard Brinkley et Jean Wyclif* (Paris: 2007).

with ethical and political issues, and this engagement is connected with external circumstances.[6]

Though Burley was traditional in his use of sources, he was an innovative participant in contemporary debates. It is generally assumed that, early in his career, when he was lecturing in Oxford and teaching as a *Magister artium*, he was largely indebted to his sources (Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Avicenna) and pursued an "orthodox" interpretation of Aristotle's psychology and natural philosophy. Later on, however, in the Parisian environment, he became aware of contemporary disputes about the views of Averroes in natural philosophy, and began to express different opinions, sometimes adopting the Averroist interpretation of Aristotle, and sometimes rejecting it in order to preserve Catholic doctrine. Finally, starting in ca. 1324, Burley revised his earlier theories, reformulating traditional realism,[7] introducing new issues into discussion of semantics[8] and physics,[9] and elaborating a new (non-Averroistic) account of psychology and the theory of knowledge.[10]

## 1. *Biography*

We have some information about Burley's life. He was born in Burley-in-Wharfedale or Burley, in Yorkshire, in 1275. During the last decade of the 13th century he attended Merton College at Oxford. In 1301 he was *Magister artium*, and remained in a teaching capacity at Merton at least until 1305, but more probably until 1307 or 1309. He then went to Paris in order to pursue theological studies. By 1324 he had obtained the degree of *Magister theologiae*. From 1327 onwards he was in Edward III's service and from around 1333 he participated in Richard de Bury's circle of scholars. He probably died in 1344 or even later.[11]

Such a brief reconstruction leaves out a number of details that remain doubtful and are subject to discussion. The literature on Burley from 1700

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[6] See Chapters Eleven and Twelve below, 321–346 and 347–373.

[7] See Chapters Four, Five, and Six below, 135–165, 167–189, and 191–222.

[8] See Chapter Three below, 87–133.

[9] See Chapters Nine and Ten below, 267–299, and 301–320.

[10] See A.D. Conti, "La conoscenza del singolare in Walter Burley," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 15 (2004), 517–40; Conti, "Walter Burley," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2011 Edition)*, ed. E.N. Zalta; available online at http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/burley/, section 7; and Chapter Seven below, 225–246.

[11] See Ottman and Wood, "Walter Burley," 21.

onwards has raised some debatable points: the exact dating of the significant events of his life and works, and his relations with Scotus and Ockham, as well as with Parisian bachelors and theologians in the 1310s and 1320s.[12]

If Burley's religious status as a beneficed priest was quickly clarified,[13] an exact reconstruction of Burley's biography and philosophical production appears to be a complicated matter that does not have an obvious solution. The problem is to establish when exactly he moved from Oxford to Paris, when he was a bachelor, and when he achieved the rank of doctor of theology. The clarification of this matter is closely connected to the other point, that is, his relations with contemporary bachelors and masters. The fact that he was an *auditor* of Scotus's lectures on the *Sentences* in Oxford or Paris, as well as contemporary citations of Burley's theories, are considered to be evidence for tracing Burley's movements and for establishing a relative chronology of his works.

This introductory chapter aims to give a clear and plausible outline of Burley's life, taking into account the different conjectures raised in the literature.

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[12] There are no monographs totally dedicated to Burley's life and works. Biographical outlines can be found in: C. Martin, "Walter Burley," in *Oxford Studies Presented to Daniel Callus*, ed. W.A. Hinnebush et al. (Oxford: 1964), 194–230; J.A. Weisheipl, "Ockham and Some Mertonians," *Medieval Studies* 30 (1968), 163–213, in particular 174–77; A. Uña Juarez, *La filosofia del siglo XIV. Contexto cultural de Walter Burley* (Madrid: 1978), 6–38; Ottman and Wood, "Walter Burley"; M. Gensler, *Ktopotliwa zmiana czyli Waltera Burleya zmagania ze zmiennością rzeczy* (Łódź: 2007), 35–66. Useful information can be found also in T.A. Archer, "Burley, Walter (1275–1345?)," in *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 7 (London: 1886), 374–76; M. Th. Disdier, "Burley (Walter)," in *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie ecclésiastiques*, vol. 10 (Paris: 1938), cols. 1381–82; A.B. Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to AD 1500*, vol. 1 (Oxford: 1957), 312–14; L.J. Daly, "The Conclusions of Walter Burley's Commentary on the *Politics*," *Manuscripta* 12 (1968), 79–92, in particular 79–80; Daly, "Some Notes on Walter Burley's Commentary on the *Politics*," in *Essays in Medieval History Presented to Bertie Wilkinson*, ed. T.A. Sandquist and M.R. Powicke (Toronto: 1969), 270–81, in particular 271–73; E.D. Sylla, "Burley, Walter," in *Dictionary of Scientific Biography. Berger to Buys Ballot* (New York: 1970), 608–12; E.D. Sylla, "Burley, Walter (c. 1275–c. 1345)," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. 2 (London: 1998), 141–44; M.C. Sommers, "Introduction," in Walter Burley, *Quaestiones super librum Posteriorum*, ed. M.C. Sommers (Toronto: 2000), 1–5; Sommers, "Walter Burley," in *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. J. Gracia and T.B. Noone (Oxford: 2003), 672–73; Sommers, "Burley, Walter," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography: in Association with the British Academy: From the Earliest Times to the Year 2000*, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and B. Harrison, vol. 8 (Oxford: 2004), 870–72; Cesalli, *Le Réalisme propositionnel*, 166–74.

[13] See Archer, "Burley," 374.

### 1.1. *Burley's Ecclesiastical Career*

In Franciscan bibliographies Burley was listed as a Minorite, while in the Augustinian bibliographies he was supposed to be an Augustinian.[14] According to Disdier, the presumption that Burley was a Franciscan was based on the biographical assumption that he was a student of Scotus and a classmate of Ockham, while his belonging to the Augustinian order was based on a claim by Alonso de Vargas, archbishop of Seville, who lived at the same time as Burley.[15] We now know that he was a secular priest, since he was a fellow of Merton College, and only a secular priest (or someone studying to become a presbyter) could study at Merton.[16] During his academic career he received a number of rectories and obtained a leave of absence from them in order to finish his studies. His clerical career began in 1309 when he received the rectory of Welsbury and a leave of absence for seven years. He held this rectory until 1318; in the same year he received the rectory of Pytchley, which he held until 1341. On 14 August 1341, he was instituted as rector of Glemsford, Suffolk. On 11 June 1342 he exchanged this with the rectory of Ashtead, Surrey. On 2 May 1344 he transferred to Immer Chapel, Wiltshire; and then, on 19 June 1344, he exchanged this with the rectory of Great Chart, Kent.[17]

### 1.2. *Biographical Outline*

Burley was born in 1275. This dating comes from manuscript evidence, namely the colophon of the last commentary on the *Ars vetus*, which is dated to 1337, where we read that the year when Burley drafted this work

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[14] See: D.A. Gandolfi, *Dissertatio historica de ducentis celeberrimis augustinianis scriptoribus* (Rome: 1704), 141–44; Johannes a S. Antonio, *Bibliotheca Universa Franciscana* (Madrid: 1732), 34; J.A. Fabricius, *Bibliotheca latina mediae et infimae aetatis*, vol. 1 (Padua: 1734), 306; J.H. Sbaralea, *Supplementum et castigatio ad scriptores trium ordinum Sancti Francisci a Waddingo aliisve descriptos* (Rome: 1806), 314; J. Lanteri, *Postrema Saecula Sex Religionis Augustinianae*, vol. 1 (Toledo: 1858), 195–96; H. Hurter, *Nomenclator Literarius Theologiae Catholicae* (Innsbruck: 1906), 525, n. 2.

[15] See M.Th. Disdier, "Burley (Walter)," in *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie ecclésiastiques*, vol. 10 (Paris: 1938), cols. 1381–82.

[16] See Uña Juarez, *La filosofia*, 11, n. 22.

[17] See Emden, *Biographical Register*, 313; Martin, "Walter Burley," 204, 217, 227–28. He also received a prebend at Waltham and a canonry at Chichester (1 May 1327), a prebend at Shalford and a canonry at Wells (14 September 1332), a canonry at York (2 August 1342), a canonry at Salisbury, and a prebend at Netheravon (1 September 1343).

was the year "etatis exponentis sexagesimo secundo".[18] His name probably comes from Burley-in-Wharfedale or from Burley in Yorkshire.[19]

Martin divides Burley's life into three periods: (1) his career in Oxford, between the 1290s and the first six–seven years of the 14th century; (2) the period at Paris up to 1326–27; and (3) his activity in England and on the Continent from 1327 to 1344, as an established master who was occasionally entrusted with missions by King Edward III.[20]

### 1.2.1. *Burley's Studies at Oxford*

In the last decade of the 13th century Burley studied in the Arts Faculty at Oxford. As a fellow of Merton College he served as regent master of arts in the first decade of the 14th century. There is scant evidence for establishing a chronology of his Oxford period. The colophon of the manuscript Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, 668, fol. 60, containing the *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*, dated 1301, designates Burley as *Magister*,[21] and the bursarial rolls of 1305 list Burley among the fellows of Merton College.[22] However, Burley's name does not occur in the rolls of the years 1297–1300, or in those of Easter 1307, the first post-1305 rolls that survive.

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[18] Civitas Vaticana, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 2146, fol. 87rb; London, Lambeth Palace 70, fol. 84rb, and Lambeth Palace 143, fol. 170rb; Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, 139/79, fol. 131r. See K. Michalski, "La Physique nouvelle et les différents courants philosophiques au XIV$^{e}$ siècle," *Bulletin de l'Académie Polonaise des sciences et des lettres: Classe d'histoire et de philosophie* (Cracow: 1928), 93–102 (republished in Michalski, *La philosophie au XIV$^{e}$ siècle: six Etudes* [Frankfurt: 1969], 207–17, in particular 208); S.H. Thomson, "Unnoticed *Questiones* of Walter Burley on the *Physics*," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforshung* 62 (1954), 390–405, in particular 391; Emden, *Biographical Register*, 312; Martin, "Walter Burley," 199–200, n. 2; Wheisheipl, "Ockham," 175.

[19] See Emden, *Biographical Register*, 312; Martin, "Walter Burley," 200.

[20] Martin, "Walter Burley," 201.

[21] On the dating of the *Quaestiones* see: M.R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Gonville and Caius College*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: 1907–08), 666; Thomson, "Unnoticed *Questiones*," 391; Emden, *Biographical Register*, 312; Martin, "Walter Burley," 201; Weisheipl, "Ockham," 175; S.F. Brown, "Walter Burley's *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*," *Franciscan Studies* 34 (1974), 200–95, at 201. Brown remarks that in the manuscript Cambridge, Gonville and Caius 645/668, fol. 69r, Burley is named "*magister*"; but in the manuscript Cambridge, Gonville and Caius 512/543, he is named "*dominus*". Moreover, Emden mentions the manuscript London, British Library, Royal 12 F. XIX, where in the colophon of the Tractatus de obligationibus, the scribe dates the work to the year 1302 and names Burley "magister". In the Merton Records of 1305 Burley is not counted as a *magister* while other fellows appear to be so. Nevertheless Weisheipl does not believe that this provides sufficient evidence to deny that Burley obtained the *magister* degree by 1305. See Weisheipl, "Ockham," 175.

[22] See Martin, "Walter Burley," 201.

As a result, Martin assumes that Burley was *Magister artium* in 1301 and probably a fellow of Merton College from 1301 until at least 1305. On the basis of Merton's statutory practice of admitting as fellows men who had obtained the bachelor degree in another college, Burley is supposed to have been, like Bradwardine, a member of Balliol College and thereafter to have entered the Merton College as a probationary fellow in 1300. This suggestion finds further support in the statutes of Balliol College, since bachelors who were about to incept were required to resign. Burley's *inceptio* could be placed in 1300 or in 1301 at the latest. Afterwards, he is supposed to have taught for longer than the three-year period established by Kilwardby's injunctions of 1277, as Burley himself seems to suggest in his *De puritate artis logicae*.[23]

The absence of Burley's name from the bursarial roll of 1307 led Martin to assume that he left Oxford before Easter 1307.[24] Nevertheless, the absence of any further evidence leaves this assumption open to doubt: Emden, Weisheipl, Uña Juarez, Ottman, and Wood place Burley in Paris by 1310. Since this point is closely connected to Burley's theological studies in Paris, it will be treated in detail in the next section.

### 1.2.2. *Theological Studies in Paris*

The earliest documentary evidence for Burley's stay in Paris is in 1310, when he was a companion of Baldwin St. Albans, the nephew of Archbishop Greenfield. In addition, the aforementioned grant of the rectory of Welbury (15 June 1309), along with the seven-year leave of absence, has been construed as evidence for Burley's Parisian study.[25] The evidence from 1310 implies that Burley started his theological studies in that year, or at least no later than that year. On the other hand, the 1309 grant—corroborated by the absence of Burley's name from the bursarial roll of 1307—suggests a prior date.[26] It seems plausible that Burley started his

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[23] Ibid., 202–03.

[24] Ibid., 202.

[25] See Emden, *Biographical Register*, 313; Martin, "Walter Burley," 204 and 206.

[26] Emden places Burley in Paris by 1310, and Weisheipl suggests that Burley could probably have started his studies in the same year (see Emden, *Biographical Register*, 313; Weisheipl, "Ockham," 176; see also Ottman and Wood, "Walter Burley," 1). Uña Juarez judges Weisheipl's reconstruction plausible owing to the great number of logical works Burley is supposed to have written when he was at Oxford, even if he maintains that the 1309 grant places the start of his theological studies before 1310 (see Uña Juarez, *La filosofia*, 15.) In contrast, Martin and Sommers place Burley's theological studies earlier. Martin maintains that Burley began his theological studies in Paris by 1308 at the latest (see Martin, "Walter Burley," 203; see also Gensler, *Ktopotliwa*, 38). Sommers assumes that Burley began studying theology at Oxford and continued studying in Paris between 1307 and 1309

theological studies in the academic year 1307–08 or, at the earliest, 1306–07. He might have begun his studies at Oxford, and then continued them in Paris, as Sommers suggests, or he might have started them in Paris.

### 1.2.3. *Scholarly Relations with Duns Scotus and Ockham*

The chronology of Burley's years in Oxford and Paris is closely connected with the relations Burley had with Duns Scotus and William Ockham. A number of old sources make Burley a disciple of Duns Scotus and a classmate of Ockham.[27] What we know now is that both Scotus and Ockham, being Franciscans, did not attend Merton College.[28] Yet Burley himself declares in his last commentary on the *Physics* that he was an *auditor* of a very subtle doctor in his youth ("audivi in juventute mea a quodam subtilissimo doctore")[29] and textual evidence confirms this assertion.[30] Scotus lectured in Oxford in the years 1298–1300; in Paris in the years 1302–04; and was regent master from 1302 to 1307. Therefore, if we assume that Burley was in Paris from 1306 onwards, we can consider it possible that Burley heard Scotus in Paris before 1308. On the contrary, it is extremely unlikely that Burley and Ockham should have been colleagues in Oxford, since Ockham almost certainly spent the years 1301–10 in London, and anyway, as a mendicant he did not study in art.[31]

### 1.2.4. *Theological Career*

Another open debate concerns the stages of Burley's theological career. Sommers suggests the following reconstruction: from 1309 to 1314 he was

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(see Sommers, "Introduction," 2–3; Sommers, "Burley, Walter," 871). Thomson's suggestion, which is now considered incorrect, should also be mentioned. Thomson conjectures the year 1305, on the basis of a putative assertion in the manuscript Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale Augusta, H65, fol. 74a, likely in the colophon of the *De potentiis anime* (see Thomson, "Unnoticed *Questiones*," 390–91). Emden doubts this suggestion and Weisheipl excludes it on the basis of a consultation of the manuscript (see Emden, *Biographical Register*, 313; Weisheipl, "Ockham," 176, n. 57). Having examined the manuscript, I can confirm this.

[27] See for instance Johann Jacob Brucker, *Historia critica philosophiae a mundi incunabulis ad nostram usque aetatem deducta*, 3 vols. (Leipzig: 1741–44), 856; and Pierre Feret, *La faculté de theologie de Paris et ses docteurs les plus célèbres*, 3 vols. (Paris: 1896), 243.

[28] See Uña Juarez, *La filosofia*, 16.

[29] Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis expositio et quaestiones* (Venice: 1501; repr. Hildesheim: 1972), fol. 198ra.

[30] Uña Juarez (*La filosofia*, 21) equates Burley's passage with Scotus's passage from his *Commentaria Oxoniensia ad IV libros Magistri Sententiarium*, II, d. 2, q. 10, ed. M. Garcìa, 2 vols. (Ad Claras Aquas: 1914), 206, 3–18 (= *Ordinatio* II, d. 2, pars 2, q. 6, ns. 475–77, *Editio Vaticana*, vol. 7 [1973], 369, 15–370, 11).

[31] For more information on this subject see Chapter Two below, 49–84.

*auditor* of lectures on Scripture and on the *Sentences*; from 1314 to 1317 a *biblicus*; and from 1317 to 1318 a *sententiarius*.[32]

Any reconstruction must be based on some textual sources and quite a lot of conjectures. There are textual evidences that in 1324 Burley was a master of theology in the Sorbonne: (1) the colophon of the manuscript Basel, Universitätbibliothek, F.I.30, fol. 3, dated 1324, mentions Burley as *Magister theologiae*.[33] (2) The manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, 1022, mentions Burley among the doctors of the Sorbonne in 1324.[34] (3) The manuscript Oxford, All Souls College, 86, fol. 1, containing his commentary on the *Physics*, dedicates the work to "carissimis amicis suis et dominis, magistris et scholaribus Parisius in philosophia studentibus".[35] Other useful hints for dating Burley's theological studies come from the so-called *Tractatus primus*, or *Tractatus de activitate, unitate et augmentatione formarum accidentalium*. In this treatise, based on a *reportatio* of his *principium* on Book IV of the *Sentences*,[36] Burley often refers to opponents who objected to his main theses. The identification of these scholars helps us to fix exact dates for Burley's inaugural lectures on the four books of the *Sentences*, and hence for his subsequent career. The opponent Burley refers to as *reverendus Cancellarius* and *magister meus* can be assumed to be Thomas Wylton, who had been a fellow of Merton College when Burley was lecturing in arts. In 1314, Wylton became master of theology at Paris, and Burley probably studied under him. Wylton became Chancellor of St. Paul's in London in 1320, while simultaneously obtaining a two-year leave of absence that allowed him to stay in Paris.[37] Further evidence for

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[32] See Sommers, "Introduction," 3; and Sommers, "Burley," 871.

[33] "Scriptum magistri Gualteri de Burley doctoris sacre theologie super librum phisicorum Aristotelis editum parisius anno domini M°CCC°xxiiii°" (fol. 3r)—cited by Thomson, "Unnoticed *Quaestione*," 391.

[34] See Feret, *La faculté*, 243. The exact reference is to: Bibl. De l'Ars., MS 1022, par. III, 117.

[35] See Emden, *Biographical Register*, 313.

[36] On the *Tractatus primus* see E.D. Sylla, "Walter Burley's *Tractatus Primus*: Evidence Concerning the Relations of Disputations and Written Works," *Franciscan Studies* 44 (1984), 257–74; L.M. de Rijk, "Burley's so-called *Tractatus Primus*, with an Edition of the Additional *Quaestio*: 'Utrum contradictio sit maxima oppositio'," *Vivarium* 34.2 (1996), 161–91. Conon Martin ("Walter Burley," 208–09) considers that Burley held his *principium* in the period 1320–27, perhaps about 1320 if we assume that he incepted in 1324. Therefore, he might have drawn up the treatise some years later. According to Sylla ("Burley's *Tractatus primus*," 258), if we admit that the chancellor Burley refers to is Thomas Wylton, the work must be dated after 1320, when Wylton is appointed chancellor of St. Paul's in London, and before Ockham's *Questions on the Physics*, namely before 1324. Ottman and Wood ("Walter Burley," 10–11) suggest that the work dates from the period 1320–22, that is, after Burley's lectures on the *Sentences* and before his inception.

[37] See Martin, "Walter Burley," 207–08.

Burley's theological career is provided by the citations of Burley's *Tractatus primus* in Ockham's *Quaestiones super libros Physicorum* dated to 1324 and in Francis of Marchia's commentaries on Book II and Book IV of the *Sentences*, likely deriving from his lectures in the academic year 1319–20.[38]

On the basis of these data we can make some suggestions about Burley's chronology. In 1324 Burley appears to be *Doctor theologiae*. Therefore, his *principium* on Book IV of the *Sentences* must have occurred at the latest in 1320. Such a conjecture is validated by the *terminus ante quem* offered both by Ockham's *Questions on Physics* (1324) and Francis's *Reportatio* (1320). Moreover, if the *reverendus Cancellarius* mentioned by Burley is Thomas Wylton, two alternatives present themselves: either the *principium* occurred in 1320, when Wylton was already chancellor, or the surviving treatise represents a redaction completed well after the oral discussion, in which Burley refers to Wylton by his status at the time of the draft. In such a case, one could confirm Sommer's suggestion that Burley was *Sententiarius* sometime during the academic year 1317–18 and, at the latest, 1319–20, and date the *principium* to this period.[39] Consequently, if we make a calculation on the basis that he should have been a bachelor *formatus* for four years, we can conclude that he became master of theology in 1322 (and at the latest in 1323 or 1324).[40]

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[38] Stephen Brown, in his edition of Ockham's *Questions on the Physics*, has identified a number of quotations of Burley's *Tractatus primus* in Questions 139–51 (see Ockham, *Quaestiones super libros Physicorum*, ed. S.F. Brown, in *Opera Philosophica*, vol. 6). Gerard Etzkorn told me that Francis quotes Burley in his *Reportatio IIB* (q. 31) and in his *Reportatio IIA* (q. 22). Both versions explicitly refer to the treatment in the commentary on Book IV (q. 23). On Francis of Marchia see Russel L. Friedman and Chris Schabel, "Francis of Marchia's Commentary on the Sentences: Question List and State of Research," *Mediaeval Studies* 63 (2001), 31–106; N. Mariani, "Certezze e ipotesi sul *Commento alle Sentenze* di Francesco della Marca," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 95 (2002), 93–183; and issue 44.1 (2006) of *Vivarium*, dedicated to the Franciscan author.

[39] It seems plausible to place Burley's *principium* and Francis of Marchia's lectures on the *Sentences* in the same academic year (1319–20) or to place Burley's *principium* in the academic year 1318–19. Weisheipl ("Ockham," 186), followed by Agustin Uña Juarez and Edith Sylla, thinks that they could have lectured in the same academic year.

[40] The year 1322 is generally conjectured by arguing that Burley could have incepted before Wylton left Paris (see Martin, "Walter Burley," 208). According to Sommers ("Burley, Walter," 871), since Wylton received his last leave of absence for two years of study in 1321, it is reasonable to assume that Burley completed his studies by the end of 1323 at the latest. If we follow Sylla's claim that the student could incept four years after his lectures on the *Sentences* (counting the same year as a *Sententiarius*), the suggestion can be advanced that Burley was a *Sententiarius* in the academic year 1318–19, and therefore incepted in 1322, or in 1323 (see E.D. Sylla, "Walter Burley's *disputatio collativa* at Paris [1319–20?]," unpublished paper delivered at Cornell University, June 2004—cited from Gensler, *Ktopotliwa*,

Another puzzling event from this stage of Burley's life is the dispute held by him in Toulouse, which survives in written form in the quodlibetal question *De primo et ultimo instanti*. The only chronological information we have is Burley's mention of this work in his *Tractatus primus*. Therefore, Burley would have been in Toulouse before the writing down of the *Tractatus primus*.[41]

### 1.2.5. *In the King's Service*

We do not know exactly when Burley left Paris. His regency likely lasted at least two years. Martin suggests that, since Burley wrote the sixth book of the commentary on the *Physics* in 1326, he left Paris at the end of 1326 at the earliest.[42]

His appointment in the service of Edward III during the following years is documented by two letters addressed by King Edward III to Pope John XXII. In the first, dated 28 February 1327, the king announces that he is sending Master Walter Burley, Sir William Trussell,[43] and Master John de

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39, n. 17). Anneliese Maier called in doubt the relation between the date 1324 (which relates to the draft of the last commentary on the *Physics*) and Burley's being a *Doctor theologiae* in the same year. Therefore, she estimated that Burley obtained the theology mastership in 1327—see A. Maier, "Handschriftliches zu Wilhelm Ockham und Walter Burley," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 48 (1955), 225–51.

41 Martin ("Walter Burley," 209) considers Burley to have disputed in Toulouse during the period of his teaching as a *Doctor theologiae* in Paris, and Weisheipl ("Ockham," 184) suggests a period before 1327. In the colophon of the manuscript Perugia, Biblioteca Comunale Augusta, H65, fol. 12rb, Burley is called "*Magister theologiae*", but such a denomination does not necessarily mean that he held that rank at the time of writing: "Explicit questio de primo et ultimo instanti compilata a doctore et magistro sacre theologie gualterio y de perurlei anglico scripta per me fratrem franciscum de forte in monte sancto millesimo quadragesimo quinquagesimo primo et die septimo februarii." The question here is whether Burley was already allowed to hold a quodlibetal dispute when he was a bachelor. Maier ("Handschriftliches," 247–48), and Ottman and Wood ("Walter Burley," 11) maintain that Burley was a *Magister artium*, and therefore there was no problem in his discussion of a quodlibet on a theme of natural philosophy. Edith Sylla ("Walter Burley's *disputatio collativa*," 39, n. 17) has suggested that, since the *baccalarius formatus* was prescribed to hold a disputation *de quolibet*, Burley could have been in Toulouse when he was a *formatus* and after his *disputatio collativa*, but before he wrote down the *Tractatus primus* in its final form. If we follow Sylla's suggestion, we can assume that Burley probably held the dispute in the period 1319–22. More recently, William Duba and Christopher Schabel maintained that Burley could have held the dispute in the 1310s, before lecturing in Paris (see their "Introduction" to the issue 49.2–3 [2009] of *Vivarium*, dedicated to Gerald Odonis).

42 See Martin, "Walter Burley," 213.

43 William Trussell was a knight who presided at the 1326 Hereford tribunal that inflicted capital punishment upon Hugh Despenser. He was also present at the deposition of Edward II (see Martin, "Walter Burley," 215).

Thoresby[44] to the papal court in order to promote the canonization of Thomas, earl of Lancaster;[45] in the second, dated 7 March 1330, he again asks the pope to receive Walter Burley, named "beloved clerk", and John de Thoresby for the same reason. Therefore, Burley was in Avignon in 1327 and again in 1330.[46] Between the two visits in Avignon he likely was back in England, as suggested by Holinshed's report that he was appointed almoner to Philippa of Hainault on her marriage to Edward III (24 January 1328). He was back again in 1331, and remained in England until 1341 (except for one or two trips to the Continent), as the acquiring and changing of a number of prebends and canonries testifies.[47]

### 1.2.6. *In Richard de Bury's Household*

Circa 1333–34 Burley became a member of a circle of scholars gathered around the bishop of Durham, Richard de Bury, and as such he had occasion to use de Bury's library and to meet contemporary scholars.[48]

Burley was overseas on royal business from 7 September 1338 until Easter 1339.[49] In 1341 he held a dispute in Bologna against Matteo da Gubbio,[50] and in 1343 he was in Avignon, where he presented a copy of his *Expositio librorum Politicorum* to Clement VI.[51]

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[44] John de Thoresby was a young man who belonged to a family that had served the crown for three generations. He had been proctor for the archbishop of York, William Melton, in the papal court between 1323 and 1324 (see Martin, "Walter Burley," 216).

[45] Thomas, earl of Lancaster, was condemned to death for treason. His brother, Henry of Lancaster, chief of the council of regency, secured a reversal of the sentence from Parliament. The request for canonization was a further stage in his rehabilitation (see Martin, "Walter Burley," 214).

[46] See Thomson, "Unnoticed Questiones," 91; Emden, *Biographical Register*, 313; Martin, "Walter Burley," 213–17; Weisheipl, "Ockham," 176, n. 61.

[47] See Martin, "Walter Burley," 216–18.

[48] Among members of Richard de Bury's circle, Martin counts three Mertonians—Burley, Thomas Bradwardine, and John Maudit—as well as the Oxford theologians Richard Fitzralph, Richard de Kilvington, and Robert Holcot; two clerks, namely Richard Bentworth and Walter de Segrave, and the canonist John de Acton (see Martin, "Walter Burley," 218). Richard de Bury (1287–1345) proved quite adept in the king's service and in ecclesiastical administration. He had numerous appointments as royal administrator and envoy—first under Edward II and later in Edward III's service—and received a number of ecclesiastical benefices. He was made bishop of Durham by papal provision on 24 October 1333—see W.J. Courtenay, "Bury, Richard (1287–1345)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 9 (Oxford: 2004), 67–69.

[49] Weisheipl ("Ockham," 176, n. 64) cites *Cal. Pat. Rolls*., Edward III, 1338–40, 123.

[50] See A. Maier, "Eine Italienische Averroistenschule aus der ersten haelfte des 14. Jahrhunderts," in *Die Vorläufer Galileis im 14. Jahrhundert* (Rome: 1949), 251–78; Maier, "Handschriftliches zu Wilhelm Ockham und Walter Burley," 241.

[51] See A. Maier, "Zu Walter Burleys Politik-Kommentar," *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale* 14 (1947), at 332–36; Weisheipl, "Ockham," 176, n. 65; F. Manzari, *La miniatura ad Avignone al tempo dei papi, 1310–1410* (Modena: 2007), 131.

The last information on Burley's life dates from 1344 and consists of two documents: a letter, addressed to the pope, seeking to secure favors for a nephew, two servants, and his clerk (January 1344),[52] and a document testifying to the acquisition of the rectory of Great Chart in Kent (19 June 1344).[53]

## 2. *Literary Production before 1324*

Burley's philosophical production is notable for the wide range of literary genres, the numerous redactions of the same text, and the circumstances that gave rise to such a plurality of textual and redactional forms. Burley's writings can be divided into: (1) those that arose in close connection with his teaching, whether as *lectiones cursorie* held as a bachelor or *lectiones ordinariae* held as a *magister* (ca. 1300–ca. 1324); (2) treatises that aim either to address a topic in the form of a monograph, or to take sides in a debate (1302, the year of composition of a series of treatises on logic, and 1324, when he presumably finished the treatise *De formis*); and (3) the last works, which he wrote down late in his life, either in order to polemicize with Ockham or at de Bury's behest. They reflect his mature thought (1324, when he started his last commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*, and 1343, when he finished his *Expositio super libros Politicorum Aristotelis*).

Burley's particular way of drafting his long expositions and of organizing the text is worthy of note. Generally, he reworks basic texts, which can be either his own texts produced some years before, or those of other authors, such as Grosseteste or Aquinas in his *Exposition on the Posterior Analytics*, or Ockham in the last commentary on the *Physics*. He divides the texts into many sections (*tractatus, capitula, partes principales, particulae*), and, at the end of each book, he usually lists a series of questions and conclusions extracted from the text.

A crucial point is the dating of the works, as we lack an exact and explicit chronological reference for most of them. Conjectures about the dates of various texts can be based on: (1) references in the colophon, for instance whether Burley is named "*dominus*" or "*magister*", or whether the scribe himself relates the work to a particular occasion in Burley's life;[54]

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[52] See *Cal. Pap. Lett.*, I, 34, cited by Martin, "Walter Burley," 229.

[53] See Martin, "Walter Burley," 229–30.

[54] Nevertheless, extreme caution is warranted, since it is quite probable that the scribe refers to Burley's academic qualification at the time of producing the copy and not at the time of the redaction of the text.

(2) Burley's self-references—sometimes he mentions a work as already completed or as to be written; and (3) Burley's polemical references to his contemporaries' theses or, in turn, the references to Burley's theories to be found in the other scholars' texts. In the last case, the debate with Ockham is particularly helpful for Burley's works insofar as it lets us distinguish between works with no hint of Ockham's doctrines, and therefore most probably produced before 1324, as Burley seems to respond to the *Venerabilis Inceptor* only after Ockham's polemics against him in the *Ordinatio* (whose second redaction dates to 1320–24), and to identify works that relate to Ockham's theses, and which thus can be given a chronology in relation to Ockham's works.

## 2.1. *University Teaching*

### 2.1.1. *Commentaries on the Organon*[55]

So far as the *expositiones* and *quaestiones* are concerned, Burley commented on all the texts of the *Logica vetus* and *Logica nova*. We know a number of versions of each text, in the form of summaries, expositions, and questions. As a result, in order to identify and correctly classify every individual redaction of the logical commentaries, a comparative study of the numerous versions would be required. At present it is only possible to provide a provisory outline.

The commentaries on the so-called *Ars vetus* (*Isagoge, Praedicamenta, Liber sex principiorum*, and *Perihermeneias*) are particularly difficult to classify and enumerate. So far as the *Isagoge* is concerned, Burley is supposed to have written three commentaries before 1324 (and a final one in 1337):[56] one exposition called *vetus*;[57] perhaps a second one which has not yet been examined, likely a "middle" version;[58] and a short commentary

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[55] In order to identify the works I will refer to the main lists of Burley's works: C.H. Lohr, "Medieval Latin Commentaries: Authors G–I," *Traditio* 24 (1968), 149–246, at 171–87; J.A. Weisheipl, "*Repertorium Mertonense*," *Medieval Studies* 31 (1969), 174–224, in particular 185–208; O. Weijers, *Le travail intellectuel à la Faculté des arts de Paris: textes et maîtres (ca. 1200–1500)* (Turnhout: 1998), 37–62. I am preparing a catalogue of the manuscripts preserving Burley's works with regard to the Italian libraries.

[56] For the latter see below, 43–44.

[57] The *Expositio vetus super librum Porphyrii*, edited by Mischa von Perger in "Walter Burley's *Expositio vetus super librum Porphyrii*. An edition," *Franciscan Studies* 59 (2001), 237–69; see also Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 173, n. 2; Weisheipl, "Repertorium," 185, n. 1a; Weijers, *Le travail*, 40, n. 1.

[58] Von Perger ("Walter Burley's *Expositio vetus super librum Porphyrii*," 238) cites M. Markowski, "Repertorium commentariorum medii aevi latinorum in Isagogen Porphyrii quae in bibliothecis Cracoviae, Erfordiae, Graecii, Lipsiae, Mellici, Monachi, Poznaniae,

by questions, the *Quaestiones octo super logicam in communi necnon super Porphyrii Isagogen*.[59] The edition of the questions, prepared by Mischa von Perger, is forthcoming. The work is a group of eight questions, four on logic in general and four on universals. Consequently, the text is to be considered a question commentary with regard to the two prologues (the general and the particular one), and not with regard to the main topic of the work, that is, the five predicables. Von Perger thinks that the questions should be dated to the years 1300–07,[60] but in Questions 7 and 8 Burley argues that universals are really distinct from their individuals, since they are *formae declarantes quidditatem* and not those forms which structure matter[61]—as far as we know, a thesis that he will support only later on, beginning with the prologue to his last commentary to *Physics*, just in order to remove the aporetic points of the traditional realist theory of universals that Ockham had pointed out.[62]

We know three versions of the commentary on the *Praedicamenta*: an *expositio vetus*, dated to the Oxford period (the *Expositio vetus super librum Praedicamentorum*),[63] a middle exposition (the *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*), probably written some years later,[64] and the exposition completed in 1337.[65]

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Pragae, Salisburgi, Varsaviae, Vaticani, Wiennae, Wimariae, Wratislaviae asservatur," *Studia Mediewistyczne* 29 (1992), 75–154, at 141, n. 2 and n. 3.

[59] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 177, n. 6.

[60] Mischa von Perger, personal communication, September 2007.

[61] See Burley, *Quaestiones octo super logicam in communi necnon super Porphyrii Isagogen*, Wroclaw (Breslau), Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, MS IV.Q.4, fols. 122vb–129ra. See also M. Vittorini, "Predicabili e categorie nell'ultimo commento di Walter Burley all'Isagoge di Porfirio," Ph.D. diss.: University of Salerno, academic year 2004–05, see 209–46.

[62] The *Quaestiones super librum Porphyrii et Praedicamentorum*, listed among Burley's works by Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 176, n. 5, Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 188, n. 5, and Weijers, *Le travail*, 42, has been demonstrated by Alessandro Conti to be a work by Jacobus de Placentia—see A.D. Conti, "Il commento di Giacomo da Piacenza all'*Isagoge* ed alle *Categorie*," in *L'insegnamento della logica a Bologna nel XIV secolo*, ed. D. Buzzetti, M. Ferriani, and A. Tabarroni (Bologna: 1992), 441–60. The so-called *Quaestiones de arte vetere*: *de universalibus, de praedicamentis, de sex principiis* (Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 188–89, n. 6; Weijers, *Le travail*, 43, n. 2) probably originate from a "misunderstanding", since the *Quaestiones de universalibus* are the same text as the *Tractatus de universalibus* (after 1337) edited by H.-U. Wöhler (see below, 44, n. 160 and 161), considered that the *folia* of the two works in manuscript London, Lambeth Palace 70 coincide.

[63] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 173, n. 1; Weisheipl, "Repertorium," 186, n. 2a; Weijers, "Le travail," 41, n. 1. The commentary is edited by M. von Perger in "Walter Burley's *Expositio vetus super librum Praedicamentorum*. An Edition," *Franciscan Studies* 61 (2003), 55–95.

[64] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 173–74, n. 2; Weisheipl, "Repertorium," 186, n. 2b; Weijers, *Le travail*, 41, n. 2. A provisional edition by A.D. Conti is available at the following URL: http://www-static.cc.univaq.it/diri/lettere/docenti/conti/Allegati/WB_praedicamenta.pdf. See also Chapter Six below, 191–222.

[65] For the latter see below, 44.

Weisheipl counts six versions of the commentary on the *Liber sex principiorum*, the last of which belongs to the *Ars vetus* commentary of 1337.[66] Rega Wood suggests that at least two belong to the Parisian period (the ones Weisheipl labels 3e and 7), and at least one to the Oxford period, which is denominated *expositio vetus* in the colophon (3c).[67] It is difficult to establish the chronology of these works. It seems to me that Weisheipl's version 3b can be called the "middle commentary" insofar as it appears in the same manuscript containing the middle commentaries on the *Praedicamenta* and on the *Perihermeneias*. As to 3a, on the one hand it follows the commentaries on the *Isagoge* and on the *Praedicamenta*, which are listed by Weisheipl and Lohr as the final version, but, on the other hand, it is followed by the middle commentary on the *Perihermeneias*. Therefore, it might be a variant of the final commentary or, more likely, an early version of the final commentary very close to the middle one. Redaction 3c, called the "*expositio vetus*", and version 3d are both associated with the final commentary, and therefore Lohr calls them "*redactio* A" and "*redactio* B". Perhaps the first one, which is shorter, is a first draft, an early version that was then reworked into a longer form (as is the case with the two versions of the *De puritate*).[68] Version 3e was written when Burley had left Paris, after the *Tractatus de formis accidentalibus*.[69]

Finally, four versions of the commentary on *De interpretatione* have survived: an elementary commentary, which can be considered a sort of summary;[70] the questions, dated 1301;[71] the middle commentary, dated

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[66] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 186–87. See also Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 174–76; Weijers, *Le travail*, 42–43. Lohr lists only three (174–75, n. 3 and n. 4 *redactio* A and B), Weijers four (41, n. 1–2; 42, n. 1; 43, n. 2). We can cite the following correspondences: (i) Weisheipl, 187, n. 3a, 187 = Lohr, 174, n. 3 = Weijers, 41, n. 1; (ii) Weisheipl, 186. n. 3b = Lohr, 175, n. 3 = Weijers, 41, n. 1; (iii) Weisheipl, 187, n. 3c = Lohr, 175, n. 4, red. A; (iv) Weisheipl, 187, n. 3d = Lohr, 175, n. 4 red. B = Weijers, 42, n. 1; (v) Weisheipl, 187, 3e; (vi) Weisheipl, 188–89, n. 6 = Weijers, 43. n. 1.

[67] See Ottman and Wood, "Walter Burley," 5. See also Weisheipl, "Ockham," 178; and Uña Juarez, *La filosofia*, 54. Nevertheless, Lohr lists the so-called *expositio vetus* as *redactio* A of the 1337 commentary on the *Ars vetus* (see Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 175, n. 4).

[68] Concerning its inclusion in the final redaction, it is very difficult to establish whether it was accidentally inserted into the later version or whether it was developed as a part of his last commentary. On the *De puritate*, see below, 43.

[69] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 187, 3e.

[70] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 188, n. 4b; *Weijers, Le travail, 42, n. 2.* See also Brown, "Walter Burley's *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*," 200.

[71] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 177, n. 7; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 188, n. 41; Weijers, *Le travail*, 42, n. 1.

1302 (the *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*);[72] and the final exposition, dated 1337.[73] The elementary commentary is a summary work that was probably occasioned by Burley's cursory lectures as bachelor at Oxford and includes a list of the Aristotelian text's contents for beginning students.[74] The questions express Burley's views on the main issues of the *De interpretatione*. The middle exposition may have arisen from Burley's post-1301 teaching activity. The final exposition reflects Burley's reworking of the commentary in order to reply to Ockham's polemical objections.[75]

In addition, Burley wrote an exposition of the *Topica* (the *Expositio super libros Topicorum*);[76] at least two works on the *Sophistici Elenchi*, namely a series of questions[77] and a *Summa librorum Elenchorum*, which Sten Ebbesen considers to be a commentary on a *Tractatus fallaciarum*;[78] and three commentaries on the *Analytica Posteriora*, namely a summary,

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[72] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 173–74, n. 2; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 188, n. 4c; Weijers, *Le travail*, 42, n. 3. The commentary has been edited by S.F. Brown in "Walter Burley's Middle Commentary on Aristotle's *Perihermeneias*," *Franciscan Studies* 33 (1973), 45–134.

[73] Mischa von Perger has edited Chapter 14 of Book II: see M. von Perger, "Walter Burleys letzter Kommentar zu Aristoteles *De interpretatione*, Kap. 14 (nebst *Corrigenda* zu verwandten Texten Burleys)," *Traditio* 59 (2004), 317–37.

[74] See S.F. Brown, "Walter Burley, Peter Aureoli and Gregory of Rimini," in *Medieval Philosophy*, ed. John Marenbon (London: 1998), 368–85, in particular 370.

[75] See below, 43–44.

[76] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 178, n. 12; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 190–91, n. 10; Weijers, *Le travail*, 44.

[77] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 179, n. 14; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 191, n. 11b; Weijers, *Le travail*, 50, n. 2. Some questions have been edited by M. von Perger in "Walter Burley's *Quaestiones libri Elenchorum 1–3 & 13–18*," *Cahiers de l'institut du moyen-âge grec et latin* 76 (2005), 159–237; others by S. Ebbesen in "Gualterus Burleus, *Quaestiones super Sophisticos Elenchos 4–12*. A Revised Edition," *Cahiers de l'institut du moyen âge grec et latin* 76 (2005), 239–82.

[78] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 178, n. 13; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 191, n. 11a; Weijers, *Le travail*, 49, n. 1. Part of the text has been edited by S. Ebbesen, "Burley on Equivocation in his Companion to a *Tractatus Fallaciarum* and in his Questions on the *Elenchi*," *Cahiers de l'institut du moyen-âge grec et latin* 74 (2003), 151–207. Other texts on the *fallaciae* have been attributed to Burley, namely: (1) the *Fallaciae breves*—see S. Ebbesen, "OXYNAT: A Theory about the Origins of British Logic," in *The Rise of British Logic, Acts of the Sixth European Symposium on Medieval Logic and Semantics*, ed. P.O. Lewry (Toronto: 1985), 1–17; and C. Kopp, "Die *Fallaciae breves* (*ad modum Oxoniae*): ein Werk Walter Burleys?" *Aristotelisches Erbe im arabisch-lateinischen Mittelalter. Ubersetzungen, Kommentare, Interpretationen*, ed. A. Zimmermann, Miscellanea Mediaevalia 18 (Berlin: 1986), 119–224 (2) the *Fallaciae ad modum Oxoniae*—see C. Kopp, *Die* Fallaciae ad modum Oxoniae. *Ein Fehlschlußtraktat aus dem 13. Jahrundert* (Köln: 1985), and; (3) the *Logica "Cum sit nostra"*—see L.M. de Rijk, *Logica Modernorum: a Contribution to the History of the Early Terminist Logic*, 2 vols. (Assen: 1967). Ebbesen ("Burley on Equivocation," 151–56) finds only the first attribution plausible; he considers the ascription of the second and the third texts to Burley very weak.

an exposition, and a question-commentary.[79] All these works were presumably composed before the 1320s, during Burley's Oxford period, since they do not contain any reference to Ockham's theories.

In the commentaries on the *Analytica Posteriora*, Burley displays an attitude that is especially pronounced in his early period, that is, he is indebted to Grosseteste's and Aquinas's commentaries. In particular, in the *Expositio super librum Posteriorum* Burley follows Grosseteste's sequence of *conclusiones* and reproduces Grosseteste's and Thomas's texts verbatim,[80] while the summary appears to be simply a shorter reformulation of the exposition. On the contrary, the *Quaestiones*, dated by Sommers to 1297–1301, when Burley was a *baccalaures artium*, appear to be a more independent work, where Burley often expresses his own views.[81]

An exposition of the *Analytica Priora* is attributed to Burley by Pelzer in his catalogue of Vatican manuscripts,[82] but Mischa von Perger doubts this attribution, for it is not witnessed by any manuscript.[83]

### 2.1.2. *Commentaries on Natural Philosophy*

Burley wrote three commentaries on the *Physics*: an exposition with questions (i.e. the *Expositio cum questionibus super libros Physicorum*); a series of independent questions (the *Quaestiones super libros Physicorum*); and the final commentary, which dates between 1324 and 1337.[84]

The first exposition has been dated to before 1316, since we find the annotation "1316" at the top of fol. 80v of one of the two manuscripts which preserve that text: Cambridge, St. John College 100 (fols. 76r–85v).

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[79] The question-commentary, the *Quaestiones super librum Posteriorum*, has been edited by M.C. Sommers (see above, n. 12).

[80] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 177–78, n. 9; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 190, n. 9a; Weijers, *Le travail*, 43, n. 1. Part of the exposition has been edited by M. von Perger, in "Walter Burley über das Vorwissen des Schluβwissens. Eine provisorische Edition von Prolog und Kap. 1 der *Expositio super librum Posteriorum*," *Traditio* 57 (2002), 239–88.

[81] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 178, n. 10; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 190, n. 9c; Weijers, *Le travail*, 43, n. 3. On the dating see Sommers, "Introduction," 6. See also Michalski, "La Physique nouvelle," 209–10, and M. Vittorini, "The Last Difference in Definition: Burley and the Tradition of *Posterior Analytics* Commentaries," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 20 (2009), 329–73.

[82] The text is preserved in the manuscript Civitas Vaticana, Bibl. Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 901, fols. 17r–19v—see A. Pelzer, *Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae codices manu scripti recensiti. Codices Vaticani Latini*: *tomus II*, *pars prior. Codices 679–1134* (Rome: 1931), 291; Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 177, n. 8; Weijers, *Le travail*, 60.

[83] See von Perger, "Walter Burley über das Vorwissen des Schluβwissens," 242.

[84] On the three commentaries on the *Physics* see R. Wood, "Burley's *Physics* Commentaries," *Franciscan Studies* 44 (1984), 275–327. See also Weisheipl, "Ockham," 180–83. For the final commentary see below, 42–43.

Rega Wood suggests it might be placed in Oxford, maybe ca. 1305.[85] In her opinion, the questions were probably written in Paris before 1322, approximately around 1315. In contrast, Edith Sylla and Silvia Donati propose Burley's Oxford years.[86]

The three commentaries are connected, as Burley seems to have composed each later version by reworking the earlier text. The early exposition appears to have been used as the source for the questions, and the later exposition is indebted to the questions, as well as to Ockham's *Expositio super octo libros Physicorum* (ca. 1323).[87] The later exposition appears to be one of the first works to reflect the sharp polemics between Burley and Ockham. Curiously, Burley borrows many passages from Ockham's commentary, but criticizes him on some crucial points.[88]

Other Aristotelian commentaries which must be mentioned are: two commentaries on the *De caelo et mundo*, one in the form of an exposition[89] and the other in the form of questions (the *Quaestiones in libros de caelo et mundo*);[90] a *Commentarius in libros De generatione et corruptione*;[91] an exposition of the *Metheora*;[92] and a commentary on the *De motu*

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[85] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 179, n. 17; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 197, n. 24a; Weijers, *Le travail*, 50–51, n. 1. On the dating see Weisheipl, "Ockham," 180–81; Wood, "Burley's *Physics*," 283 and 301.

[86] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 180, n. 19; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 198, n. 24c, Weijers, *Le travail*, 51, n. 2. On the dating see Wood, "Burley's *Physics*," 286 and 301; E.D. Sylla, "Walter Burley's Practice as a Commentator on Aristotle's *Physics*," *Medioevo* 27 (2002), 301–71, in particular 309–11; S. Donati, "Il dibattito sulle dimensioni indeterminate tra XIII e XIV secolo: Thomas Wylton and Walter Burley," *Medioevo* 29 (2004), 177–231, in particular 205. Thomson discovered the *Questions on the Physics* in the manuscript Basel, Universitätbibliothek F.v.12. The manuscript contains on fol. 108r a list of the questions from the first to the eighth book, 108 in all. The codex (which has an unfortunate number of lacunae) preserves only the first 43 questions. See Thomson, "Unnoticed Questiones," 394–97. Thomson transcribed the list of the questions as well as the whole text of *quaestio* 27, the first of Book 3: "Utrum hec diffinitio motus sit conveniens: motus est actus entis in potentia secundum quod in potentia."

[87] See Wood, "Burley's Physics," 283–300 and 302. Wood's impression is that Burley modified the text early in his work, and later on, when he was engaged in the last books, he revised the basic text less and less.

[88] See ibid., 294–96.

[89] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 181, n. 21; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 199, n. 27; Weijers, *Le travail*, 52.

[90] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 181, n. 22; Weijers, *Le travail*, 53.

[91] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 181, n. 22; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 199, n. 28; Weijers, *Le travail*, 53. The commentary is edited by Gensler, *Ktopotliwa*, 205–379. Gensler (*Ktopotliwa*, 57) dates the work to 1304–06/7—see also Chapter Ten below, 301–20.

[92] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 182, n. 26; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 200, n. 29; Weijers, *Le travail*, 53.

*animalium*.[93] Burley also wrote various short expositions of the *Parva Naturalia*, including the *De sensu et sensatu*,[94] the *De memoria et reminiscentia*,[95] the *De somno et vigilia*,[96] and the *De longitudine et brevitate vitae*.[97] All these works date from the Oxford period.

On the contrary, Burley's exposition on the *De substantia orbis* of Averroes[98] dates from the Parisian years, when Burley was closer to Averroes's views. Uña Juarez appears to be cautious about the authenticity of the work.[99] Nevertheless, although there is no explicit ascription to Burley, the diffusion of the work in the 14th century and the numerous quotations and references that are found in the *Tractatus de formis*, in the exposition on the *De motibus animalium* (which includes a parallel passage), and in the final exposition on the *Ars vetus* make this attribution sufficiently certain.[100]

Finally, Burley's commentaries on the *De anima* must be mentioned here. They are two, one in the form of exposition, the *Expositio libri De anima*,[101] and one in the form of questions on the third book, the

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[93] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 184, n. 33; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 203, n. 38; Weijers, *Le travail*, 55. This commentary is edited by H. Shapiro and F. Scott, "Walter Burley's Commentary on Aristotle's *De motu animalium*," *Traditio* 25 (1969), 171–90.

[94] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 183, n. 30; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 202, n. 34; Weijers, *Le travail*, 55.

[95] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 184, n. 31; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 202, n. 35; Weijers, *Le travail*, 55.

[96] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 184, n. 32; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 202–03, n. 36; Weijers, *Le travail*, 55.

[97] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 184, n. 34; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 203, n. 37; Weijers, *Le travail*, 55.

[98] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 203, n. 39; Weijers, *Le travail*, 56. The work has been recently edited by Marta Vittorini, "Il commento di Walter Burley al *De substantia orbis*: un'edizione," *Medioevo* 36 (2011), 301–80, at 319–80.

[99] See Uña Juarez, *La filosofia*, 44 and 69, n. 193.

[100] See Vittorini, "Il commento di Walter Burley," 301–05. In addition to these writings Weisheipl lists some other works preserved in the Erfurt manuscripts Amplon. Q. 290 and Q. 312, among which are an *Expositio et quaestiones super Metaphysicam Aristotelis*; *Divisiones et sententiae summariae super Metaphysicam*; *Quaedam quaestiones naturales*; an *Expositio super libros De anima*; and an *Expositio de motu animalium*. In her edition of Richard Rufus of Cornwall's *In Physicam Aristotelis* (Oxford: 2003), 29–41, Rega Wood dates the bulk of these two manuscripts to the mid-13th century, and therefore rejects Burley's authorship, with the exception of the commentary on *De motu animalium*, which seems to be added in the 14th century in a space that the scribe of the 13th century left blank.

[101] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 182–83, n. 29; and Weijers, *Le travail*, 54. Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 200–01, n. 32a, 32b, and 32c, counts three commentaries on the *De anima*, but the commentary listed by him as 32a, preserved in the MS Erfurt, Amplon. Q.312 (fols. 20v–28r), is not by Walter Burley, if Wood is correct in dating the manuscripts to ca. 1250 (see note 98). On the *Expositio libri De anima* see Chapter Seven below, 225–46.

*Quaestiones super tertium de anima*.[102] The *Quaestiones* are considered to be Burley's earliest work on the soul, in that Burley is named *dominus*, which is a title given to a bachelor.[103] In their studies on Averroism, Maier and Kuksewicz have examined Burley's *Expositio libri De anima*.[104] According to them, there is an evolution from the earlier Oxford work to the *Expositio*, apparently written in Paris. Burley's exposure to the Parisian environment and, in addition, his being a student of Thomas Wylton, provide a perfect explanation for Burley's adherence to some Averroistic views.[105] Kuksewicz conjectures that the *Expositio libri De anima* can be dated to 1316, as Burley seems to know Jean de Jandun's *Tractatus de sensu agente* (1312) and Wylton's *Quaestio de anima intellectiva* (1315–16), on the one hand, and seems to be ignorant of both Wylton's *Quaestio quodlibetalis* dating from 1316 and Jandun's *Quaestiones de anima*, written in the years 1316–18, on the other.[106]

### 2.1.3. *Theological Works*

Burley's theological production took place during his years in Paris. At present we know of only a single question on the possibility of man's being saved by means of natural law alone.[107] Unfortunately, his commentary on the *Sentences*, which would attest to his lecturing on the *Sentences* at the University of Paris, has not been found.[108] Edith Sylla does not exclude

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[102] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 200–01, n. 32b; see also Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 182–83 (note); and Weijers, *Le travail*, 54, n. 1. The commentary has been edited by E.A. Synan, *Questions on the De anima by Magister Adam Burley and Dominus Walter Burley* (Leiden: 1997).

[103] See Synan, "Introduction," in Synan, *Questions on the De anima*, xi; Ottman and Wood, "Walter Burley," 6.

[104] See A. Maier, "Ein unbeacheter 'Averroist' des 14ten Jahrhunderts: Walter Burley," in *Medioevo e Rinascimento. Studi in onore di Bruno Nardi* (Florence: 1955), 477–99; also in *Ausgehendes Mittelalter*, vol. 1, 101–22; Z. Kuksewicz, *De Siger de Brabant à Jacques de Plaisance: la théorie de l'intellect chez les Averroistes latins des XII^e^ et XIV^e^ siècles* (Cracow: 1968); Kuksewicz, "The Problem of Walter Burley's Averroism," in *Studi sul XIV secolo in memoria di Anneliese Maier*, ed. A. Maierù and A. Paravicini Bagliani (Rome: 1981), 341–77.

[105] Jung-Palczewska, "Le problème," 101–09, remarks that, in his last commentary on the *Physics*, Burley appears to oppose Averroes's views concerning the eternal existence of movement and time, and the eternity of the world, and to prefer Thomistic positions, which are consistent with the Christian belief. This is true also for the theories of soul and knowledge—see Chapter Seven, below, 236–41.

[106] See Kuksewicz, *De Siger de Brabant à Jacques de Plaisance*, 249; Kuksewicz, "The Problem," 377.

[107] See S.H. Thomson, "An Unnoticed *Quaestio theologica* of Walter Burley," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 6 (1950), 84–88, text at 87–88.

[108] See Ottman and Wood, "Walter Burley," 10.

the possibility that Burley did not write an *ordinatio*.[109] Some themes of the fourth book of the *Sentences* are dealt with in the *Tractatus primus*, which is the *reportatio* of the *principium* Burley held on the fourth book of the *Sentences* when he was a bachelor of the *Sentences*. Burley also wrote a commentary on the *Liber de causis* which has been lost.

### 2.2. *Treatises and (single) Questions*

#### 2.2.1. *Treatises on Logic*

Turning to Burley's treatises, from his Oxford period comes a group of short logical treatises which, according to de Rijk and Pinborg, were part of a logic course given by Burley in 1302:[110] the *De consequentiis*,[111] the *De exclusivis*,[112] the *De exceptivis*,[113] the *De suppositionibus*,[114] the *De obligationibus*,[115] and the *De insolubilibus*.[116] All these treatises have been

[109] See Sylla, "Walter Burley's *Tractatus Primus*," 261. This suggestion appears to be plausible, as Burley was such a well-known *magister* that his work would have been widely copied and disseminated.

[110] See J. Pinborg, "Walter Burley on Exclusives," in *English Logic and Semantics. Acts of the 4th European Symposium on Medieval Logic and Semantics*, ed. H.A.G. Braakhuis, C.H. Kneepkens, and L.M. de Rijk (Nijmegen: 1981), 305–30, in particular 306; and L.M. de Rijk, "Walter Burley's Tract *De Exclusivis*. An Edition," *Vivarium* 23.1 (1985), 23–54, in particular 23. See also Ottman and Wood, "Walter Burley," 7; Sommers, "Introduction," 6.

[111] Weisheipl ("*Repertorium*," 195, n. 19a and 19b) lists two redactions of this tract. See also Weijers, *Le travail*, 47, n. 1 and 2. Redaction 19a has been edited by Niels Jørgen Green-Pedersen, "Walter Burley's *De Consequentiis*: an Edition," *Franciscan Studies* 40 (1980), 102–66.

[112] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 195, n. 16; Weijers, *Le travail*, 46. This treatise was edited by de Rijk, see above, n. 99.

[113] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 195, n. 17; Weijers, *Le travail*, 46. The work is edited by L.M. de Rijk, "Walter Burley's *De exceptivis*. An Edition," *Vivarium* 24.1 (1986), 22–49.

[114] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 191, n. 12; Weijers, *Le travail*, 44. This treatise is edited by S.F. Brown, "Walter Burleigh's Treatise *De suppositionibus* and its Influence on William of Ockham," *Franciscan Studies* 32 (1972), 15–64, at 31–64.

[115] Weisheipl ("*Repertorium*," 196, n. 20a, 20b, and 20c) lists three redactions of this work. See also Weijers, *Le travail*, 47–48, nn. 1, 2, 3. Redaction 20a has been edited by R. Green, "The Logical Treatise *De obligationibus*: An Introduction with Critical Text of William of Sherwood and Walter Burley," Ph.D. diss. Louvain: 1963. Martin Grabmann (*Die Introductiones in logicam des Wilhelm von Shyreswood* († *nach 1267*): *Literarhistorische Einleitung und Textausgabe* [Munich: 1937], 21–23) had rejected the attribution of one of these treatises, the shorter one, while Paul Vincent Spade and Eleonore Stump ("Walter Burley and the *Obligationes* Attributed to William of Sherwood," *History and Philosophy of Logic* 4 [1983], 9–26) consider it to be authentic.

[116] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 196, n. 21; Weijers, *Le travail*, 48–49. Text edited by M.L. Roure in "La problématique des propositions insolubles au XIII$^{e}$ siècle et au début du XIV$^{e}$, suivie de l'édition des traités de W. Shyreswood, W. Burleigh et Th. Bradwardine," *Archives d'Histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 37 (1970), 205–326, at 262–84.

dated to 1302.[117] They present Burley's first statement on certain logical issues that from 1324 onwards he would have reformulated because of Ockham's polemical objections.

A case in point is the *De consequentiis*, which appears to be his first assessment on the theory of consequences. On the one hand it shows clear parallels with the homonymous section of the *De puritate artis logicae, tractatus longior* (1325–28), yet on the other hand it appears to be less systematic, and in agreement with the theory formulated in the *De exclusivis*, which Burley partially criticizes in the *De puritate*.[118] The *De suppositionibus* provides a further example: the theory of supposition as it is stated in this work lacks a reference to the polemic with Ockham on personal and simple supposition. Later, in the *De puritate*, Burley includes a long response to Ockham's objections.[119]

One should also mention a group of works labeled by Weisheipl as *Notabilia de logicis*, which includes the *De relativis*,[120] the *De abstractis*,[121]

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[117] For the *De exclusivis*, the *De consequentiis*, and the *De obligationibus* such a dating is based (1) on the colophon of the *De obligationibus* in the manuscript London, British Library, Royal 12.F.XIX, fol. 148r, and (2) on the observation that the hand that writes the date "1302" on fol. 148r is the same English hand that writes the other two treatises in the same manuscript (see de Rijk, "Walter Burley's Tract *De Exclusivis*," 24; Green-Pedersen, "Walter Burley's *De Conse-quentiis*," 108–09). The *De suppositionibus*, insofar as it is referred to by Ockham in his *Commentary on the Sentences* (1318–19) and, in addition, is incorporated into his *Summa logicae* (1324), can be dated to before 1319. Moreover, since, in the manuscripts, it appears alongside works dated 1301 and 1302, according to Brown it is to be dated to 1302 (see Brown, "Walter Burley's Treatise," 16). The *De Insolubilibus* is ascribed an early date by Ph. Boehner, perhaps 1302—see Ph. Boehner, "Introduction," in Walter Burleigh, *De Puritate Artis Logicae Tractatus Longior With a Revised Edition of the Tractatus Brevior*, ed. Ph. Boehner (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: 1955), i–xiv, in particular xiii–xiv; and also Roure, "La problématique," 206.

[118] See Green-Pedersen, "Walter Burley's *De Consequentiis*," 108–09, who conjectures that the text might have been revised twice by Burley.

[119] Ockham made use of the *De suppositionibus* in his redaction of the *Summa logicae*: on the one hand he incorporated Burley's treatment of the relative terms, on the other hand, Ockham argued against Burley's position on personal and simple supposition. Later, Burley replied to Ockham's *Summa logicae* with his *De puritate*—see Bohner, "Introduction," viii, xiii–xiv; Brown, "Walter Burleigh's Treatise *De suppositionibus*," 27–29.

[120] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 192, n. 14i; Weijers, *Le travail*, 45–46. The tract has been edited by H. Shapiro and M.J. Kiteley, "Walter Burleigh's *De relativis*," *Franciscan Studies* 22 (1962), 155–71.

[121] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 192, n. 14ii; Weijers, *Le travail*, 45–46.

the *De ente*,[122] the *De finito et infinito*,[123] the *De toto et parte*,[124] the *De sensibus*,[125] the *De materia et forma*, or *De duobus primis principiis*,[126] the *De qualitatibus*,[127] the *De Deo, natura et arte*, or *De tribus in toto universo per se agentibus*,[128] the *De potentia activa et passiva*,[129] and the *De diffinitione*.[130] Weisheipl notes that these very short treatises lack any hint of Ockham's doctrine, and therefore are to be dated to before the 1320s.[131] Burley might have written down these texts in his early Parisian years.

Other works belonging to the genre of logical treatises are: the *De probationibus*[132] and the *De syncategorematibus*.[133]

Finally, before 1324, Burley wrote also the first redaction of the *De puritate artis logicae*, probably when he taught in Oxford.[134]

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[122] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 193, n. 14iii; Weijers, *Le travail*, 45–46. The treatise has been edited by H. Shapiro, "Walter Burley's *De ente*," *Manuscripta* 7 (1963), 103–08.

[123] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 193, n. 14iv; Weijers, *Le travail*, 45–46. The work has been edited by H. Shapiro and F. Scott, "Walter Burley's *De finito et infinito*," *Manuscripta* 9 (1965), 170–71.

[124] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 193, n. 14v; Weijers, *Le travail*, 45–46. The treatise has been edited by H. Shapiro and F. Scott, "Walter Burley's *De toto et parte*," *Archives d'Histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 33 (1966), 299–303.

[125] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 193, n. 14vi; Weijers, *Le travail*, 45–46. The work has been edited by H. Shapiro and F. Scott, in Walter Burley, *De sensibus*, (Mitteilungen des Grabmann-Instituts) 13 (Munich: 1966).

[126] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 193–94, n. 14vii; Weijers, *Le travail*, 45–46. The tract has been edited by H. Shapiro, "More on the 'Exaggeration' of Burley's Realism," *Manuscripta* 6 (1962), 96–98.

[127] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 194, n. 14viii; Weijers, *Le travail*, 45–46. The treatise has been edited by H. and C. Shapiro, "*De qualitatibus* des Walter Burley," *Franziskanische Studien* 45 (1963), 257–60.

[128] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 194, n. 14ix; Weijers, *Le travail*, 45–46. The treatise has been edited by H. Shapiro in "Walter Burley's *De Deo, natura et arte*," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 15 (1963), 88–90.

[129] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 194, n. 14x; Weijers, *Le travail*, 45–46. The treatise has been edited by H. Shapiro and F. Scott, "Walter Burley's *De potentia activa et passiva*," *The Modern Schoolman* 43 (1966), 180–82.

[130] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 194, n. 14xi; Weijers, *Le travail*, 45–46. The treatise has been edited by H. Shapiro and F. Scott, "Walter Burley's text *De diffinitione*," *Medieval Studies* 27 (1965), 337–40.

[131] See Weisheipl, "Ockham," 179.

[132] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 195; Weijers, *Le travail*, 46. See also Pinborg, "Walter Burley on Exclusives," at 328–29.

[133] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 195; Weijers, *Le travail*, 46–47.

[134] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 191, n. 13a; Weijers, *Le travail*, 45, n. 1. The so-called *De puritate artis logicae tractatus brevior* has been edited by Ph. Boehner, in Walter Burleigh, *De puritate*, 199–260.

2.2.2. *Treatises (and Questions) on Natural Philosophy*

The very first treatise Burley wrote is probably the *De potentiis animae*,[135] as Jean Kitchel argues.[136] This seems extremely likely, since the *Quaestiones super tertium De anima* and the *De potentiis* show close similarities not only in the doctrinal position but also in the text. Moreover, in the *De potentiis*, Burley cites the commentaries on the *De generatione* and on the *De libro Metheorum* as works to be written; so, since Burley wrote the commentary on the *De generatione* when he was still *dominus*, this work also dates from his early Oxford period, and more precisely before 1301.[137]

Burley's position on the role of accidents in transmutation, and on the intension and remission of accidental forms, was recorded in the *Tractatus primus*[138] and in the *Tractatus secundus* (or *De intensione et remissione formarum*).[139] As has already been remarked, the first treatise was occasioned by Burley's *principium* on the fourth book of *Sentences*, and therefore was written sometime after the oral discussion, but before Ockham's *Quaestiones super libros Physicorum*.[140] The *Tractatus secundus* comes from around 1323, that is, before Burley started writing the last commentary on the *Physics*.[141] Burley argues against the addition and mixture theories of the intension and remission of accidental forms and defends the substitution theory he had inherited from Albert the Great and Godfrey of Fontaines.

Just before writing his *Tractatus primus*, probably between the end of the 1310s and the beginning of the 1320s, in Toulouse, Burley held a quodlibetal dispute on *De primo et ultimo instanti*, which survives in written

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[135] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 201–02, n. 33; Weijers, *Le travail*, 54–55. The work has been edited by M.J. Kitchel, "The *De potentiis animae* of Walter Burley," *Medieval Studies* 33 (1971), 85–113.

[136] See M.J. Kitchel, "Walter Burley's Doctrine of the Soul: Another View," *Medieval Studies* 39 (1977), 387–401, in particular 401.

[137] As to the label "*dominus*" see Gensler's edition in *Ktopotliwa zmiana*, 379.

[138] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 44, n. 38; Weijers, *Le travail*, 55–57.

[139] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 205, n. 46; Weijers, *Le travail*, 57.

[140] See above, note 36.

[141] A. Maier, "Zu Walter Burleys Traktat *De intensione et remissione formarum*," *Franciscan Studies* 25 (1965), 293–321, at 294 and 302, conjectures the period 1320–23; she assumes as a *terminus post quem* the year 1320 insofar as Burley refers to an opinion that appears in Francis of Marchia's *Commentary on the Sentences* (and we know Francis lectured on the *Sentences* in the academic year 1319–20). Sommers, "Burley, Walter," 872, suggests 1323 or a bit later. On the content of the treatise see also H. Shapiro, "Walter Burley and the Intension and Remission of Forms," *Speculum* 34 (1959), 413–27.

form.[142] Moreover, along with the *Tractatus primus* and *Tractatus secundus*, we find in the manuscript witnesses the question: "Utrum contradictio sit maxima oppositio."[143] The incipit, "*Adhuc circa genus oppositionis restat inquirendum*", seems to imply a first part, which in the manuscript Civitas Vaticana, Bibl. Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 2148 is supplied by the four conclusions of the *Tractatus primus*.[144]

Other treatises by Burley are: *De principiis naturalibus*,[145] *Tractatus de planetis et eorum virtute*,[146] and an *Abbreviatio libri Problematum Aristotelis*.[147] Finally, in the prologue of his last commentary on the *Physics* Burley refers to a *Tractatus de novem generibus accidentium*, which has not been found.[148]

The authorship of a question *De duratione*, traditionally attributed to Burley, has been recently questioned by Olga Weijers,[149] while that of the *Liber de vita et moribus philosophorum*[150] has been convincingly rejected

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[142] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 205, n. 47; Weijers, *Le travail*, 58. The question has been edited by H. and C. Shapiro, "*De primo et ultimo instanti* des Walter Burley," *Archiv für Geschichte der philosophie* 47.2 (1965), 157–73. On the content of the question see P. Feltrin and M. Parodi, "Il problema del primo e ultimo istante in Walter Burley," *Medioevo* 9 (1983), 137–78.

[143] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 204–05, n. 45; Weijers, *Le travail*, 57. It has been edited twice, by R. Palacz, "*Gualterii Burleii quaestio*: *Utrum contradictio sit maxima oppositio* (Ms. Vat. Ottob. 318 fol. 141va–145vb)," *Mediaevalia Philosophica Polonorum* 11 (1963), 128–39; and by de Rijk, "Burley's so-called *Tractatus Primus*," at 176–91.

[144] In the Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana we find four manuscripts preserving the text, and three of them include the text of the *quaestio* between the *Tractatus primus* and the *Tractatus secundus*. In particular, in the manuscript Vat. lat. 2148 to the four *conclusiones* of the *Tractatus primus* jointly with the question "Utrum contradictio" are given the comprehensive title of *Quaestiones quinque de quolibet* and the *conclusiones* are compiled in the form of questions opening with "*Utrum*". Moreover, the scribe presents the question "Utrum contradictio" as the fifth question of the *Tractatus primus*. William Duba suggests it might be a reediting of the scribe, who appears to have possessed an independent spirit, for he refuses to continue copying the text insofar as he judges Burley's text as useless and false.

[145] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 199, n. 26; Weijers, *Le travail*, 52. Weijers remarks that the work is also ascribed to Giles of Rome.

[146] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 200, n. 30; Weijers, *Le travail*, 53. Weijers presents its authenticity as doubtful.

[147] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 185, n. 35; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 200, n. 31; Weijers, *Le travail*, 53.

[148] Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis expositio et quaestiones*, fol. 8vb. See also Ottman and Wood, "Walter Burley," 3.

[149] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 198–99, n. 25; Weijers, *Le travail*, 53.

[150] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 207, n. 50; Weijers, *Le travail*, 61–62. See also J.O. Stigall, "The Manuscript Tradition of the *De vita et moribus philosophorum* of Walter Burley," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 11 (1957), 44–57. The work has been edited by H. Knüst, *Gualteri*

by Mario Grignaschi, who ascribes the work to an anonymous Italian author.[151]

### 3. *The Last 20 Years: Polemical and "Ordered" Works*

As we have already said, Burley was a very prominent author, whose high prestige and large influence are connected above all with the philosophical writings of the last period of his life,[152] the years 1324–43, when his semantic and ontological views evolved in response to Ockham's acute criticism of traditional realism, moving from the moderate realism typical of the first part of his career to the extreme realism of his later works.

Among them, the first to be mentioned is the last commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*, the *In Physicam Aristotelis Expositio et Quaestiones*, which was composed after 1324: the first six books were written down in the years 1324–27; the others in the years 1334–37 at Richard de Bury's request.[153] As far as we know, it is in the prologue of this work that Burley

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*Burlaei* Liber de vita et moribus philosophorum *mit einer altspanischen übersetzung der Escurialbibliothek* (Tübingen: 1886).

[151] See M. Grignaschi, "Lo Pseudo Walter Burley e il *Liber de vita et moribus philosophorum*," *Medioevo* 16 (1990), 131–90; and Grignaschi, "*Corrigenda et addenda* sulla questione dello pseudo Burleo," *Medioevo* 16 (1990), 325–54.

[152] See Chapter Thirteen below, 377–409.

[153] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 179, n. 18; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 198–99, n. 24b, Weijers, *Le travail*, 51, n. 3. The conjectured date comes from the manuscript evidence, for in the *Epistula dedicatoria* Burley himself affirms that the first six books were written at Paris, when he was younger, and that the final books were compiled later, at de Bury's request, when he was already old. Moreover, the rubrics in the first and fourth books give evidence for the year 1324 (Book I) and 1326 (Book IV). Michalski and Weisheipl cite the *Epistula dedicatoria*, Oxford, All Souls College, MS 86, fol. 1: "qui quondam iuvenis scripseram super sex libros Phisicorum, super duos reliquos scribam iam senex" (see Weisheipl, "Ockham," 182, n. 90); fol. 159v: "Carissimis amicis suis et dominis magistris et scholaribus parisius in philosophia studentibus de burley anglicus vestre universitatis alumnus salutem . . . Rogatus per Reverendum in Christo patrem, dominum meum, dominum Riccardum dumelinensis sedis episcopum augmentationibus scientie ferventissimum zalatorem, . . . ut cum dudum studens parisius VI libros primos physicorum Aristotelis exposuerim, complerem super suos libros residuos opus illud, factus sum timidus et perplexus . . . Septimi igitur et octavi physicorum expositionem sic disposui tenendo modum et ordinem, quem tenui in VI libris precedentibus." (See Michalski, "La Physique nouvelle," 211–12.) Thomson, later corrected by Weisheipl on the exact reading of the date, mentions Basel, Universitätsbibliothek MS F.II.30: "Scriptum magistri Galteri de Burley doctoris sacre theologie super librum phisicorum Aristotelis editum parisius Anno domini M°CCC°XXiiii—Incipit primus liber" (see Thomson, "Unnoticed Questiones," 391; Weisheipl, "Ockham," 181). Maier cites the manuscript Civitas Vatican, Bibl. Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 5934: "et completus est iste liber quartus anno domini M°CCC° vicesimo sexto, secunda die mensis Martii, dominica qua cantatur in ecclesia catholica Letare Jerusalem" (see A. Maier, "Zu einigen Problemen der Ockhamforshung," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 46 [1953], 161–94,

for the first time openly attacks Ockham's ideas, replies to his criticism, and introduces his new theses on universals and knowledge.[154]

In the same years of the composition of the first four books of his last commentary on the *Physics* (1324–26),[155] Burley wrote a *Tractatus de formis*[156] where he stakes out his own position in relation to Ockham's philosophy of nature and in particular to Ockham's negation of the existence of quantitative, abstract forms.

The longer version of the *De puritate* comes from Paris, between 1325 and 1328 (or 1324 and 1327). As with (almost) all of the work from this period, the new version of the *De puritate* also was prepared just in order to reply to Ockham's logico-metaphysical views, and to his theory of supposition in particular.[157]

Burley's most important and influential work, the *Expositio super Artem Veterm Porphyrii et Aristotelis*, which consists of the commentaries on *Isagoge*, *Categories*, *Liber sex principiorum*, and *De interpretatione*, dates from 1337.[158] While the first versions of these commentaries appear to be

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in particular 183–84). A similar colophon is found in many manuscripts and it supplies the evidence that Burley completed the fourth book on 2 March 1326 (see Maier, "Handschriftliches," 243; Weisheipl, "Ockham," 181–82). The last two books were written after the complete redaction of the exposition on the *Ethics* and before the longer exposition on the *Ars vetus*, and therefore between 1334 and 1337. Michalski ("La physique nouvelle," 212) cites another version of the *Epistula dedicatoria*, preserved in Venezia, Marciana Z. LCCV, B. fol. 243r: "Tenendo igitur modum et ordinem, quem in exponendo librum Ethicorum tenui." Weisheipl ("Ockham," 182–83) quotes Oxford, All Souls College, MS 86, fol. 1: "dudum modo meo textus logicales Aristotelis exposueram" and concludes that, as Burley seems to refer to his logical commentaries as something distant in the past, the longer commentary on the *Ars vetus* was still to be written.

[154] See Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis Expositio et Quaestiones*, fol. 8vb. See below, Chapter Five, 167–89, and Chapter Seven, 225–46.

[155] See Ottman and Wood, "Walter Burley," 15; Sommers, "Burley, Walter," 871. Weisheipl ("Ockham," 183–84; and "*Repertorium*," 204) considers this treatise to be the first reaction to Ockham's physics.

[156] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 204, n. 42; Weijers, *Le travail*, 56. The tract has been edited by F. Scott, *Walter Burley's Treatise De formis* (Munich: 1970).

[157] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 192, n. 13b; Weisheipl, "Ockham," 179; Weijers, *Le travail*, 45, n. 2. The treatise is edited by Ph. Boehner, in Walter Burleigh, *De puritate*, 1–197. Boehner, "Introduction," viii, has conjectured the dating 1325–28 on the basis of these two facts: the *De puritate* contains a reply to Ockham's *Summa logicae*, and so it must be dated after 1324. A summary of the *De puritate*, made by a *frater* Johannes Nicolai, and extant in the MS Erfurt, Amploniana, O. 67, is dated to 1329 by the scribe (see fol. 125v). Ottman and Wood, "Walter Burley," 12–13, suggest the period 1324–27, that is, before Burley had left Paris. Weisheipl, "Ockham," 176, n. 58, remarks that in the MS Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 16130, which contains the *De puritate*, Burley is referred to as a fellow of the Sorbonne (see fol. 110vb).

[158] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 174–76, n. 4; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 189, n. 7; Uña Juarez, *La filosofia*, 55–56; Weijers, *Le travail*, 42–43, n. 1.

connected with his teaching, they are conceived as the expression of Burley's own mature realist convictions, in contrast to Ockham's nominalist view. Burley sometimes inserts passages from his middle commentaries verbatim, while he reworks other passages in order to declare his own position in the contemporary debate. Many long passages from Ockham's commentaries on the same Aristotelian works are transcribed verbatim by Burley, attentively analyzed, and sharply criticized.[159]

In the chapter on substance of his final commentary on the *Categories*, Burley announces his intention of writing a treatise, *De universalibus*, which therefore is a later work (after 1337).[160] It consists of four questions on the ontological state of universals, constituting an exhaustive monograph on the problem.[161]

The works on practical philosophy were composed in this last period. Burley, at the request of Richard Bentworth, bishop of London (1338–39) and, after his death in 1339, under the patronage of Richard de Bury, revised and completed his exposition of the *Ethica* and began the exposition of the *Politica*.

The exposition of the *Ethica*, namely the *Expositio super libros Ethicorum*,[162] can be placed in the years 1333/34–41. According to Burley's

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[159] This is the case with the commentary on the *Categories*, the *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, and the commentary on the *De interpretatione*, the *Expositio super librum Perihermeneias Aristotelis*—see Chapter Six below, 191–222, and Brown, "Walter Burley's *Quaestiones*," 43.

[160] See Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 197, n. 23; Weijers, *Le travail*, 50. The *Tractatus de universalibus* has been edited by H.-U. Wöhler in Walter Burley, *Tractatus de universalibus* (Stuttgart: 1999).

[161] At present the autonomy and dating of the *De universalibus* are uncontroverted (see, for instance, Wöhler's "Nachwort" to his edition and Ottman and Wood, "Walter Burley," 18), but, before A.D. Conti's remark (see A.D. Conti, "Studio storico-critico," in Johannes Sharpe, *Quaestio super universalia*, a cura di A.D. Conti [Florence: 1990], 279, n. 29) that the final exposition of the *Praedicamenta* (cap. *de substantia* [Venice: 1497], fol. d2vb: "De ista tamen materia plenius apparebit in tractatu de universalibus Deo concedente") refers to the *De universalibus* as a treatise to be written, the autonomy and dating of the tract had been subject of discussion. Martin ("Walter Burley," 204, n. 2) considered it as the earliest evidence of the antagonism with Ockham and dated it from 1320 to 1323. Weisheipl ("Ockham," 180) suggested it was written soon after Ockham's *Ordinatio*. According to Weisheipl, the absence of textual references to Ockham can be explained by conjecturing either that Burley wrote the text before he could carefully study Ockham's text, or that he had already replied to Ockham in another work. Uña Juarez hypothesized that the treatise was included in the final exposition of the *Ars vetus* dated 1337. Although in the 1497 Venice edition the treatise is inserted into the prologue of the exposition on the *Isagoge*, it clearly appears to be an editor's addition, made in order to fill up a gap in content in the commentary, for Burley, at that very point of the text, enumerates Porphyry's three famous questions on the universals without discussing them.

[162] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 185–86, n. 36; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 205–06, n. 48; Weijers, *Le travail*, 58.

statements, he had already written an exposition of the first six books; and later, probably after 1338, he wrote Books VII–X and revised Books I–VI by abbreviating them in order to make them uniform with the later redaction.[163]

In 1341, Burley was in Bologna and discussed the *Quaestio de actione contrariorum*.[164] It is a reply to Matteo da Gubbio, who had attacked Burley in his question: "Utrum propositio de praeterito fuerit prius vera de praesenti."[165]

Finally, in 1343 Burley completed the *Expositio super libros Politicorum*,[166] which is supposed to be his last work. Burley dedicated it to Clement VI, as well as to Richard de Bury, and presented it to the pope in Avignon on 23 November 1343.[167]

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[163] See the *prologus* to the commentary: "Unde quia super 6 libros primos ethicorum diffusius alias memini me scripsisse, nunc completo opere super 4 ultimis libris . . . revertor ad scribendum super 6 libros alios modo breviori, servando eundem modum et ordinem in omnibus dictis libris . . . Scripsi pavidus super libro ethicorum que senili memoria nunc occurrunt, aliqua que particulariter prius scripseram compendiosius recensendo," cited by Uña Juarez, *La filosofia*, 80–81, n. 224. See also Chapter Eleven, below, 322, n. 3–5. According to Weisheipl ("Ockham," 187) the work was completed in the years 1333–34, while, more convincingly, Lohr ("Medieval Latin," 185, n. 36) dates Books I–VI to the years 1334–37 and Books VII–VIII to the years 1338–41. Uña Juarez substantially agrees with him.

[164] Inc.: "Queritur utrum contraria adequata in virtutibus agant et patiantur ad invicem"—see G.J. Etzkorn, *Iter Vaticanum Franciscanum* (Leiden: 1996), 24; Weijers, *Le travail*, 52. Some fragments are cited by E.D. Sylla, The *Oxford Calculators and the Mathematics of Motion, 1320–1350. Physics and Measurement by Latitudes* (Harvard University dissertation, 1970—printed in *Harvard University Dissertations in History of Science*, New York: 1991).

[165] Anneliese Maier ("Eine Italienische Averroistenschule," 257–58; and "Handschriftliches," 241) suggests that Matteo da Gubbio was referring to Burley's *Tractatus de tempore* in the commentary on the fourth book of the *Physics*.

[166] See Lohr, "Medieval Latin," 186–87, n. 37; Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 206, n. 49b; Weijers, *Le travail*, 58–59.

[167] See Martin, "Walter Burley," 210; Uña Juarez, *La filosofia*, 81–82. See also Chapter Twelve, below, 347–73. On the Avignon manuscript, Civitas Vaticana, Bibl. Apostol. Vat., Borg. Lat. 126, see Manzari, *La miniatura ad Avignone*, 131. Weisheipl, "*Repertorium*," 206, n. 49a, ascribes to Burley also some *Quaestiones super libros Politicorum*, but they are not present in any other list of Burley's writings, and so the attribution must be considered doubtful. See Weijers, *Le travail*, 58, n. 1.

## Appendix: A Complete List of Burley's Works

*Aristotelian Commentaries*

01. *Expositio vetus super librum Porphyrii* (ca. 1300; edited)
02. *Commentarius super librum Porphyrii* (ca. 1300–ca. 1307; unedited)
03. *Questiones octo super logicam in communi necnon super Porphyrii Isagogen* (1300–07 according to von Perger, but more probably after 1324; still unedited)
04. *Expositio super Porphyrii Isagogen* (1337; unedited)
05. *Expositio vetus super librum Praedicamentorum* (ca. 1300; edited)
06. *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum* (ca. 1300–ca. 1307; edited, on web)
07. *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis* (1337; unedited)
08–12. Five commentaries on the *Liber sex principiorum* (before 1324; unedited)
13. *Expositio super librum sex principiorum* (1337; unedited)
14. *Expositio vetus super librum Perihermeneias* (ca. 1300; unedited)
15. *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias* (1301; edited)
16. *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias* (1302; edited)
17. *Quaestiones super librum Posteriorum* (1297–1301; edited)
18. A summary of the *Analytica Posteriora* (1300?–07? unedited)
19. *Expositio super librum Posteriorum* (ca. 1300–ca. 1307; partially edited)
20. *Expositio super libros Topicorum* (ca. 1300–ca. 1307; unedited)
21. *Quaestiones super Sophisticos Elenchos*, or *Quaestiones libri Elenchorum* (ca. 1300–ca. 1307; edited)
22. *Summa librorum Elenchorum* or *Tractatus fallaciarum* (ca. 1300–ca. 1307; partially edited)
23. *Expositio (cum questionibus) super libros Physicorum* (before 1316, probably 1305; unedited)
24. *Questiones super libros Physicorum* (ca. 1315 according to R. Wood; 1301–07 according to E.D. Sylla and S. Donati; unedited)
25. *In Physicam Aristotelis Expositio et Questiones* (Books I–VI 1324–27; Books VII–VIII 1334–37; unedited)
26. *Expositio librorum de celo et mundo* (before 1324, probably between 1300 and 1307; unedited)
27. *Questiones in libros de caelo et mundo* (before 1324, probably between 1300 and 1307; unedited)
28. *Commentarius in libros De generatione et corruptione* (between 1304 and 1306/07; edited)
29. *Expositio super libros Metheorum* (before 1324, probably between 1300 and 1307; unedited)
30. *Expositio de motu animalium* (before 1324, probably between 1300 and 1307; edited)
31. *Expositio de sensu et sensato* (ca. 1300–ca. 1307; unedited)
32. *Expositio de memoria et reminiscentia* (ca. 1300–ca. 1307; unedited)
33. *Expositio de somno et vigilia* (ca. 1300–ca. 1307; unedited)
34. *Expositio de longitudine et brevitate vite* (ca. 1300–ca. 1307; unedited)

35. *Expositio de substantia orbis* (from Parisian years, probably in the 1310s; edited)
36. *Quaestiones super tertium de anima* (ca. 1300; edited)
37. *Expositio libri De anima* (1316; unedited)
38. *Expositio super libros Ethicorum* (1333/34–41; unedited)
39. *Expositio super libros Politicorum* (1343; unedited)

*Treatises and questions*

01. *De potentiis animae* (before 1301; edited)
02. *De consequentiis* (1302; edited)
03. *De exclusivis* (1302; edited)
04. *De exceptivis* (1302; edited)
05. De *suppositionibus* (1302; edited)
06. *De obligationibus* (1302; edited)
07. *De insolubilibus* (1302; edited)
08. *De relativis* (from Parisian years, probably in the 1310s; edited)
09. *De abstractis* (from Parisian years, probably in the 1310s; unedited)
10. *De ente* (from Parisian years, probably in the 1310s; edited)
11. *De finito et infinito* (from Parisian years, probably in the 1310s; edited)
12. *De toto et parte* (from Parisian years, probably in the 1310s; edited)
13. *De sensibus* (from Parisian years, probably in the 1310s; edited)
14. *De materia et forma* (from Parisian years, probably in the 1310s; edited)
15. *De qualitatibus* (from Parisian years, probably in the 1310s; edited)
16. *De Deo, natura et arte*, or *De tribus in toto universo per se agentibus* (from Parisian years, probably in the 1310s; edited)
17. *De potentia activa et passiva* (from Parisian years, probably in the 1310s; edited)
18. *De diffinitione* (from Parisian years, probably in the 1310s; edited)
19. *De probationibus* (from Parisian years, probably in the 1310s; unedited)
20. *De syncategorematibus* (from Parisian years, probably in the 1310s; unedited)
21. *De puritate artis logicae tractatus brevior* (before 1324; edited)
22. *De primo et ultimo instanti* (around 1320; edited)
23. *Tractatus primus* (1320–23; unedited)
24. *Tractatus secundus*, or *De intensione et remissione formarum* (around 1323; unedited)
25. *Quaestio: Utrum contradictio sit maxima oppositio* (between 1320? and 1323? edited)
26. *De principiis naturalibus* (before 1324; unedited)
27. *Tractatus de planetis et eorum virtute* (before 1324; unedited)
28. *Abbreviatio libri Problematum Aristotelis* (before 1324; unedited)
29. *Tractatus de formis* (1324–26; edited)
30. *De puritate artis logicae tractatus longior* (1325–28; edited)
31. *Questio de actione contrariorum* (1341; unedited)
32. *Tractatus de universalibus* (after 1337; edited)

CHAPTER TWO

# THE OCKHAM–BURLEY DISPUTE

Catarina Dutilh Novaes[1]

## 1. *Introduction*

Although Walter Burley's writings are clearly embedded in the philosophical debates of his time—he represents one of the main bridges between 13th- and 14th-century thinking—there is no doubt that his most significant opponent was William of Ockham. In effect, the development of Burley's doctrines can only be understood against the background of Ockham's critique of his earlier positions. Prompted by Ockham's arguments against the sort of moderate realism that he endorsed in his earlier years, Burley underwent a radical revision of his own ideas, leading to an exacerbation of his realist views. Insofar as one can speak of typical 13th-century views (thus disregarding the important dissimilarities between the different authors), Burley's earlier position represents precisely the gist of these views; his later positions, however, are distinctly dissimilar and inaugurate a new form of realism.[2]

Burley's writings can be divided into two groups: the earlier group formed by texts that show no awareness of Ockham's doctrines, and the later group that contains responses to Ockham's criticism and corresponds to a reshaping of his realist views. It is significant that awareness of Ockham's doctrines is even used as a criterion to date Burley's works. Moreover, some consider the period in which Burley began to reply to Ockham's criticism to be his richest period intellectually speaking.[3] For all these reasons, if there is one single author whose relation to Burley deserves to be spelled out individually in a companion volume such as this

[1] I am grateful to Alessandro Conti and Andrew Arlig for insightful remarks and suggestions on earlier drafts.

[2] The general lines of the change from moderate realism to radical realism, as well as elements of invariance in the two periods, are spelled out in A.D. Conti, "Walter Burley," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (*Fall 2011 Edition*), ed. E.N. Zalta; available online at http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/burley/.

[3] See J. Ottman and R. Wood, "Walter Burley: His Life and Works," *Vivarium* 37 (1999), 1–24, at 10.

one, it is certainly Ockham. This does not mean that other authors should not be considered for a thorough understanding of Burley's doctrines; he is greatly indebted to 13th-century authors such as Albert the Great, John Duns Scotus, Henry of Ghent, and Thomas Aquinas, and he also engages in debates with some of his contemporaries such as Peter Auriol, Francis of Marchia, and Adam Woodham.[4] But with no other author is the dialectical structure of the debate as clear and significant as it is with Ockham.

Given the depth and the length of the topic, in the present context it is impossible to offer an exhaustive overview of the Ockham–Burley dispute, so only a selection of a few representative subjects will be treated here: I will treat two main areas where the Burley–Ockham disagreement is acutely felt, namely ontology and logic.[5] Regarding ontology, I will deal with the issues of universals and of the categories, and also briefly discuss the impact of their metaphysical disagreements on their respective physical doctrines. As for logic, I will focus on the notions of signification, supposition, and consequence. Furthermore, in order to outline the fundamentally dialectical nature of these disputes, I will concentrate not only on the different views held but more specifically on the *arguments* and *counterarguments* put forward by each author against the positions held by the other. But before treating these philosophical issues properly speaking, I first present a brief biographical account of the contacts between the two authors.

Notice however that the Burley–Ockham interplay is not exclusively characterized by negative influence. Indeed, Ockham does not reject the totality of Burley's positions. Some of them Ockham simply incorporates, often with no explicit attribution to Burley—but of course only insofar as they did not conflict with his rejection of other views held by Burley. In sum, there are also some points of positive influence of Burley on Ockham; the same holds, albeit to a lesser degree, for the converse relation.[6]

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[4] See Ottman and Wood, "Water Burley," 15, and L. Cesalli, *Le Réalisme Propositionnel* (Paris: 2007), 172.

[5] For a comparison of Ockham's and Burley's respective ethical views, see R. Wood, "Willing Wickedly: Ockham and Burley Compared," *Vivarium* 37 (1999), 72–93. For a comparison focusing on epistemology, see P.V. Spade, "Some Epistemological Implications of the Burley–Ockham Dispute," *Franciscan Studies* 35 (1975), 212–22. For a comparison centered on their theories of universals and categories see A.D. Conti, "Ockham and Burley on Categories and Universals: a Comparison," *The Modern Schoolman* 86.1–2 (2008–09), 181–210.

[6] See A.D. Conti, "Ontology in Walter Burley's Last Commentary on the *Ars vetus*," *Franciscan Studies* 50 (1990), 121–76, at 143–45, for points that Burley appears to have taken over from 14th-century nominalism, such as the dissolution of the problem of individuation.

## 2. *Contacts Between the Two Authors*[7]

Burley was about ten years older than Ockham; while Burley was studying at Oxford to obtain his degree as a master of arts (which he obtained in 1301), and subsequently in his period as a fellow of Merton College (until circa 1310), Ockham was undertaking his preparatory studies in the distinguished Franciscan school in London, known as London Greyfriars. Just when Ockham may have gone to Oxford to study theology[8] (circa 1310), Burley went to Paris for the same purpose (Burley obtained his Parisian degree in theology in 1324, while Ockham famously never obtained a degree in theology, and thus remained a *venerabilis inceptor*, a "venerable beginner"). So it is extremely unlikely that they should have met in England, but if Ockham indeed went to Oxford in 1310, in this period he may very well have had some contact with Burley's earlier writings. It is well known, for example, that Burley's early treatise on supposition had considerable influence on Ockham.[9] It can be conjectured that they might have met in Paris in 1324, when Ockham was on his way to Avignon and Burley still lived there, but it seems more likely that their first personal encounters would have taken place in Avignon in the years 1327–28; by that time they were already sworn enemies.

According to Ottman and Wood,[10] the first explicit attack in the dispute came from Ockham's side, in his *Scriptum* on the *Sentences* (circa 1319). Ockham says that he would not have treated a certain frivolous objection (*cavillatio*) had it not been that "some people who consider that they know logic give great weight to such childish considerations (*puerilia*) on account of which they posit many absurdities",[11] presumably referring to Burley. Ottman and Wood add that this is the only explicit personal attack at Burley in Ockham's writings. By contrast, Burley may have taken a while to reciprocate, as there is no sign of animosity on Burley's part until 1324; but once he got started, there followed a constant stream of

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[7] For the general background, see J.A. Weisheipl, "Ockham and Some Mertonians," *Medieval Studies* 30 (1968), 163–213.

[8] But notice that we are only sure of his presence in Oxford for the years 1318–19; for the rest, he may have begun his theological studies (in 1310) in London Greyfriars—see William J. Courtenay, "The Academic and Intellectual Worlds of Ockham," in *The Cambridge Companion to Ockham*, ed. P.V. Spade (Cambridge: 1999), 17–30, for a detailed account of Ockham's life.

[9] See S.F. Brown, "Walter Burleigh's Treatise *De suppositionibus* and its Influence on William of Ockham," *Franciscan Studies* 32 (1972), 15–64.

[10] See Ottman and Wood, "Walter Burley," 12.

[11] Ockham, *Ordinatio* I, d. 2, q. 4, in *Opera Theologica*, vol. 2, 146.

insults.[12] In fact, until the very end of his career Burley seems to have considered Ockham as his main opponent. Ockham, however, was apparently occupied with much more hostile and dangerous enemies in his disputes with the Avignon popes, so that no time was left to engage in further debates with Burley.

Interestingly, Ockham's quarrels with the popes may even have played an (initial) role in the success of Burley's clerical and court career. Burley's first mission in Avignon was to plead for the canonization of Thomas of Lancaster, who had been beheaded some years before in the context of the complicated political situation in England at the time.[13] "In 1330, at the time of his second mission, this time as a king's clerk, when Burley again attempted to have Thomas of Lancaster canonized, his status as one of Ockham's most prominent enemies can only have been an advantage at the papal curia."[14] Burley subsequently enjoyed a successful political career, in particular as a member of the circle of Richard de Bury, but all his success does not seem to have quenched his animosity towards Ockham, intellectually as well as personally.

## 3. *Ontology*

The core of the disagreements between Burley and Ockham is without a doubt their ontological divergences. While it is something of a caricature to portray Burley as a realist and Ockham as a nominalist, this simplified picture does capture the essence of their differences. Roughly put, Burley is a realist in that he maintains that all (or at least most) of the concepts that we use to organize our knowledge of the external world really correspond to actually existing extramental entities (or features thereof). In other words, Burley defends the idea of an isomorphism between language, thought, and reality: conceptual and linguistic distinctions are ultimately grounded in the real features of things, and this is exactly why they can be used to explain the being of things. His ontology is also "densely populated" in that he recognized individual as well as universal entities. By contrast, Ockham's nominalism consists in a reduction not only of the absolute class of existing entities (he only recognizes individual entities), but also in a reduction of the class of classes of entities; that is, Ockham

[12] See Ottman and Wood, "Water Burley," 13–14.
[13] For details, see Ottman and Wood, "Water Burley," 16–17.
[14] Ottman and Wood, "Water Burley," 17.

rejects the idea that there is an ultimate ontological basis for most of the taxonomical concepts that we use to classify entities in the extramental world. For Ockham, many elements of our epistemic conceptual schema are purely mental and linguistic constructions, with no real counterpart in the extramental world. These two aspects of disagreement, where Burley goes for ontological abundance whereas Ockham goes for ontological parsimony, are best illustrated by their debates on the categories and on universals, so let us turn to these issues now.[15]

But before we proceed, a preliminary remark is in order: it is important to bear in mind that Burley's (early) realist views are actually not Ockham's main target. His criticism affects different versions of 13th-century realism, such as those found in Thomas Aquinas or Henry of Ghent. In particular, on many occasions Ockham is specifically opposing the views of John Duns Scotus, especially the notion of formal distinction (see for example Chapter 16 of the first part of his *Summa logicae*). But Scotus had died in 1308, and thus could obviously not reply to Ockham's criticism. Burley's replies to Ockham's criticism of realism are, however, not

[15] There is another very interesting aspect of disagreement between Ockham and Burley, concerning Burley's famous *propositiones in re*. As is well known, Ockham's ontology is composed exclusively of individuals; the later Burley, by contrast, accepts complex entities in his ontology (i.e. facts, articulations of individuals), which are the *significata* of true sentences: *propositiones in re*. Here, however, for reasons of space, I will not be able to discuss this particular topic. Fortunately, there are excellent analyses of Burley's *propositiones in re* in the literature, most notably in Conti, "Ontology" (see n. 6 above) and Cesalli, *Le Réalisme Propositionnel* (n. 4, above). See also below, L. Cesalli's contribution to this volume (Chapter Three, 119–31) for a presentation of and additional bibliographical references to Burley's *propositiones in re*. Let me just briefly mention an interesting fact: in his *Quodlibet* III, q. 12, Ockham discusses whether a mental proposition is composed of things or of concepts; naturally, he defends the latter position. What is interesting for our purposes is that he may be criticizing the view presented by Burley in his *Questions on the Perihermeneias* (edited in S.F. Brown, "Walter Burley's *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*," *Franciscan Studies* 34 [1974], 200–95), written around 1301; this suggests that he may have been aware of Burley's early theory of propositions. The editor of Ockham's *Quodlibet* refers to Burley's last *Expositio* of the *Categories*, but as we know this latter text was written only much later. So if it is Burley at all that Ockham has in mind, it is the young Burley of the *Quaestiones*. Just to hint at the spirit of Ockham's argumentation, here is one of his arguments against the view that mental propositions are composed of things: "Tertio sic: si subiectum et praedicatum essent res extra animam, tunc in ista propositione 'canis comedit panem' subiectum vere comederet praedicatum." (*Quodlibet* III, q. 12, in *Opera Theologica*, vol. 9, 248). In the prologue of his last commentary on the *Categories* Burley explicitly addresses the arguments put forward by Ockham against propositional realism—see Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis, prologus*, in *Expositio super Artem Veterm Porphyrii et Aristotelis* (Venice: 1497; repr. Frankfurt am Main: 1967), fol. c4va.

an attempt to defend Scotus's views; in fact, Burley comes to reject many of them himself. For example, he seems to agree with Ockham's dismissal of Scotus's notion of formal distinction on the grounds that it implies "a rejection of the standard definition of identity".[16] One could say that Ockham's criticism of Scotus's position in particular, and of moderate realism in general, led Burley to revise his own views, especially to the extent that they resembled those of Scotus, so as to render them immune to Ockham's attacks. As a result, what emerges from Burley's reaction to Ockham's criticism is a novel, more extreme, but also more internally coherent form of realism.

### 3.1. *Universals*

One important motivation for the problem of universals—famously, one of the most vexed metaphysical issues in the history of philosophy[17]—is in fact a semantic consideration: is there some (nonindividual) thing *in re* that corresponds to the common terms of our language, just as individuals correspond to singular terms?[18] That is, do common terms designate *something* other than individuals, just as singular terms designate individuals? The fundamental realist/nominalist division with respect to universals consists in realists giving this question an affirmative reply while nominalists give it a negative reply. That common terms can be predicated of many individuals is an undisputed semantic fact, but it is often felt that additional metaphysical facts are needed to ground this semantic fact (i.e. to explain why a term such as "man" can indeed be correctly predicated of many individuals); otherwise the very meaningfulness of common terms might be jeopardized. Moreover, the semantic issue is directly related to the issue of the possibility of our knowledge of the world, which depends to a great extent on the generality afforded by common terms for its expression. In other words, the problem of universals is at a crucial crossroad between semantics, metaphysics, and epistemology.

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[16] Conti, "Ontology," 141.

[17] See Alain de Libera, *La querelle des universaux. De Platon à la fin du Moyen Age* (Paris: 1996) for a general overview up to medieval times. See also A.D. Conti, "Categories and Universals in the Later Middle Ages," in *Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Categories*, ed. Lloyd Newton (Leiden: 2008), 369–409, and Conti, "Ockham and Burley on Categories and Universals" (see n. 5, above) for issues very similar to those discussed here.

[18] See Conti, "Ontology," 137, and Conti, "Categories and Universals," 369. This holds in particular of the specific period we are dealing with here.

Medieval discussions on universals usually took place in commentaries on Aristotle's *Categories* or on Porphyry's *Isagoge* (originally intended to be an introduction to the former book). In this text, Porphyry raises the question of what genera, species, and so on—that is, universals—would correspond to, but quickly adds that an introductory book is not the place to treat such a thorny matter (*Isagoge*, 1, 13–16). He seems to raise four likely possibilities: (1) universals belong to the understanding alone; (2) universals have extramental independent corporeal existence; (3) universals have extramental independent incorporeal existence; (4) universals have extramental incorporeal existence, but only in individuals.[19] In the 13th and 14th centuries, the debate revolves mostly around positions (1), the nominalist position—universals have no extramental existence whatsoever—and (4) the moderate realist position—universals really have extramental existence, but only insofar as they inhere (incorporeally) in sensible individuals. Position (2) is virtually untenable,[20] and (3) corresponds to the Platonic view of the independent existence of Forms, which in that period was largely thought to have been refuted by Aristotle once and for all.[21]

For our purposes, it is important to notice that Ockham's criticism of realism with respect to universals in fact targeted the different variations of moderate realism held by his direct opponents such as Aquinas and Scotus, and not realism per se—something clearly perceived by Burley. The different versions of 13th-century moderate realism are ultimately all attempts to maintain a distinctively Aristotelian form of realism, which emphasizes the real existence of universals but with ontological primacy given to sensible individuals. This is essentially the tension diagnosed by Ockham, which Burley sought to resolve.[22]

The gist of Burley's early views on universals, developed in writings such as his middle commentary on the *Categories* and his *Expositio* of

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[19] See Marilyn McCord Adams, *William Ockham*, 2 vols. (Notre Dame: 1987), 5.

[20] Notice however that this view was actually held by some "collection" theorists in the 12th century.

[21] See Marilyn McCord Adams, "Universals in the Early 14th Century," in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, ed. N. Kretzmann, A. Kenny, and J. Pinborg (Cambridge: 1982), 413–39.

[22] See Conti, "Categories and Universals," 374 on how the question of the status of universals necessarily became the question of their relation to individual substances, insofar as it was generally thought that everything depends for its existence on the existence of primary substances.

the *De Anima*, is that substantial universals[23] are constitutive parts of the essence of the individuals that instantiate them, and that this is their only kind of extramental existence.[24] Moreover, he recognizes the importance of the mental existence of universals. In fact, Burley's position echoes Aquinas's contention that universals exist in two ways, namely mentally and extramentally, but with the difference that, for Burley, the extramental existence of universals, just as their mental existence, is actual and not only potential, while for Aquinas only their mental existence is actual.[25] At this early stage, Burley views the being of universals in individuals as tantamount to the being of these very individuals (which are obviously actualized and not merely potential). This implies that universal natures are not really distinct from the individuals instantiating them, but are, as Scotus would say, only formally distinct from these individuals. Another important consequence of these views concerns the notion of numerical identity: Burley's early views seem to imply that universals exist in reality in numerically distinct particulars simultaneously, but without being numerically multiplied themselves.[26]

As already noted, Ockham reacts to different versions of moderate realism with respect to universals; he intends to show for each of them that they are internally inconsistent by raising puzzles and drawing undesired

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[23] Substantial universals correspond to genera and species (i.e. secondary substances), such as humanity and animality. Burley does not discuss accidental universals in any detail, but presumably the idea would be that accidental universals are a constitutive part of what we could call an individual's "accidental being".

[24] See Chapter Five, on universals and individuals, in this volume, below 182–87; Conti's entry on Walter Burley in the *Stanford* (*online*) *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, section 3; and Conti, "Ontology," 138–39. In the latter, Conti quotes a long passage from Burley's commentary on *De Anima*, on the question whether universals have extramental existence, which is convenient considering that the text is otherwise to be found only in manuscripts.

[25] See Conti, "Walter Burley," section 3.

[26] See McCord Adams, *Ockham*, 30. But notice that Adams attributes the first ("most realist") version of moderate realism criticized by Ockham, in his *Ordinatio*, d. 2, q. 4, to Burley; however, the passage quoted by her seems to describe the position that Burley came to adopt *as a reaction* to Ockham's criticism. She refers to Burley's last commentary on the *Ars vetus*, which is now thought to have been written around 1337; some aspects of the realism described in the passage she quotes are indeed to be found in this work, as we will see, but Ockham could not possibly have been referring to it, for obvious chronological reasons. P.V. Spade, *Five Texts on the Mediaeval Problem of Universals: Porphyry, Boethius, Abelard, Duns Scotus, Ockham* (Indianapolis, Ind.: 1994), 115, seconds Adams's (mistaken) attribution of this position as characterized by Ockham to Burley. Instead, Ockham seems to be criticizing a hypothetical realist position, and not one necessarily represented by any author up to his time. But when developing his later views, it is likely that Burley attempted to render his position immune to Ockham's criticism of the generic "most realist" position as well.

conclusions from their premises.[27] He expounds his rejection of realism towards universals in several texts, such as his *Ordinatio* I, d. 2, qq. 4–8,[28] his commentary on the *Categories* (cap. 8.1), and his *Summa logicae* (pars I, Chapters 14–16). However, if there is one fundamental thesis being rejected by Ockham in all his criticism of these positions, it is Scotus's notion of formal distinction and its variants.[29] Indeed, different versions of moderate realism deflate the existence of universals to such an extent (while still insisting on their extramental existence) that their being becomes virtually identical to the being of the individuals instantiating them; this entails thus that there is no *real* difference between the universal nature of a thing and its individuality, as they are inseparable and indistinct in reality. Nevertheless, they are not identical regarding their definitions (and thus regarding what can be predicated of them), as they are ultimately related to different forms, and this is what is meant by a *formal* distinction between, for example, the human nature of Plato and his individuality. They are the same in reality, but formally distinct.[30]

One important motivation for the introduction of the notion of formal distinction had been the failure of transitivity of predication: from "Socrates is a man" and "Man is a species" obviously it should not follow that "Socrates is a species."[31] So moderate realists defended real identity between individuals and universals (e.g. between Socrates and the species humanity), but they rejected the view that all that could be predicated of individuals could be predicated of the universals they instantiated, and vice versa. In other words, they did not subscribe to what we now know as "Leibniz's Law", according to which two items are identical if and only

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[27] On the argumentative strategies of Ockham's nominalist program, see P.V. Spade, "Ockham's Nominalist Metaphysics: Some Main Themes," in *The Cambridge Companion to Ockham*, ed. Spade, 100–17.

[28] Translation in Spade, *Five Texts* (see n. 26 above).

[29] Conti, "Categories and Universals," 377, agrees with this diagnosis.

[30] Here is Ockham's own description of Scotus's position: "some want to claim that the universal is, in some way, outside the soul and in individuals; and while they do not want to distinguish a universal from individuals in reality, they distinguish it formally from them. Thus, they say that in Socrates there is a human nature that is contracted to Socrates by an individual difference, and which is not really, but only formally, distinct from that nature. Thus, while there are not two things, one is not formally the other." (*Summa logicae* I, cap. 16, in *Opera Philosophica*, vol. 1, 54). All translations of the Latin texts are my own, unless otherwise stated. There are English translations of *Summa logicae* Parts I and II, but the translation of Part I is generally not very reliable. By contrast, the French translation of the whole *Summa* (by J. Biard et al.) is to be highly recommended.

[31] For references to other authors, see Conti, "Categories and Universals," 377, n. 19.

if everything that can be predicated of one of them can be predicated of the other.

Now, as we have seen, Burley's earlier views on universals seem at least implicitly to rely on something like Scotus's formal distinction.[32] Similarly, the counterintuitive consequences for the notion of numerical identity that emerge from moderate realism concerning universals are also at the core of Ockham's criticism of this position, and, as noted above, also affect Burley's early positions.

Among Ockham's many objections against these views, two of them (both ultimately targeting the notion of formal distinction) seem particularly important: what we could call the objection of contrary attributes and the objection of numerical identity. These objections are construed as undesired conclusions that are drawn from the realist theory, in effect sufficiently objectionable so as to motivate a rejection of the theory altogether. The first objection relies essentially on Ockham's denial of any kind of identity or distinction other than *real* identity/distinction, while the second relies on the counterintuitive nature of the idea that universals are really in many individuals while still being numerically one.

Ockham goes to great lengths to argue that one can simply not make sense of a notion of identity besides that of real identity (i.e. a relation that is symmetric, transitive, and reflexive).[33] And if this is so, then one must accept that if two items are identical then everything that can be predicated of one can also be predicated of the other (i.e. indiscernibility of identicals must hold). Now, suppose that Socrates is white and Plato is black; if Socrates the individual is identical to the universal humanity that he instantiates, then everything that is predicated of Socrates is also correctly predicated of humanity, in particular that it is white. But the same reasoning applies to Plato, humanity, and the predicate black; therefore, the universal humanity would have contrary attributes simultaneously, namely being white and being black, in virtue of the attributes of the different individuals that it instantiates; but this is plainly absurd. In fact, the absurdity would transfer again to the level of individuals: if humanity is both black and white, then all individuals instantiating it are also both

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[32] Burley does not use the phrase "formal distinction", but he does use Henry of Ghent's notion of intentional distinction (cf. his questions on the *Perihermeneias*, q. 4), which is closely related to Scotus's notion of formal distinction—see Conti, "Categories and Universals," 376.

[33] See Ockham, *Summa logicae* I cap. 16; *Ordinatio* I, d. 2, q. 1 and q. 6. See Conti, "Categories and Universals," 378–79, for additional references to Ockham's texts. Here, I will focus on *Summa logicae* I.

black and white. Ockham provides an even more dramatic example of this problem:

> Again, it would follow that something of the essence of Christ would be miserable and damned, as that common nature really existing in Christ and in the damned individual would be damned, as in Judas. But this is absurd.[34]

As for the objection of numerical identity, Ockham targets the problematic ontological status of those common natures that exist only insofar as they are instantiated in individuals: is their being then particular or universal? Is it numerically one or numerically many? He raises many arguments to outline the weakness of the moderate realist views in this respect, but one is particularly interesting for us in that it later received an explicit reply by Burley:

> Similarly, it would follow that God could not annihilate an individual substance without destroying the other individuals [of the same species], since if He were to annihilate some individual, he would destroy the whole which is the essence of that individual and, consequently, He would destroy that universal which is in that thing and in others. Consequently, other things [having the same essence] would not remain, for they could not remain without one of their parts, which is posited to be that universal.[35]

The idea is the following: if the being of a universal coincides with that of any of the individuals it instantiates, but if this universal being at the same time has some sort of unity (being numerically one), then the destruction of one of these individuals would entail the annihilation of the entire being of the universal, as it is numerically one, and therefore of all the other individuals instantiating it. This is of course absurd, as we obviously know from experience that when a human being dies, for example, other human beings simply persist.

Given these counterintuitive conclusions, Ockham is led to conclude not only that the moderate realist view—which conflates the particular being of individuals with the common being of universals—is untenable,

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[34] Ockham, *Summa logicae* I, cap. 15, 51: "Item, sequeretur quod aliquid de essentia Christi esset miserum et damnatum, quia illa natura communis exsistens realiter in Christo et in damnato esset damnata, quia in Iuda. Hoc autem absurdum est."

[35] Ibid. "Propter idem etiam sequeretur quod Deus non posset unum individuum substantiae adnihiIare nisi cetera individua destrueret, quia si adnihilaret aliquod individuum, destrueret totum quod est de essentia individui, et per consequens destrueret illud universale quod est in eo et in aliis, et per consequens alia non manerent, cum non possent manere sine parte sua, quale ponitur illud universale."

but also that the very notion of a "common, universal being" in the extramental world is to be rejected:[36]

> Similarly, we ought to say with the philosophers that in a particular substance, there is nothing substantial except the particular form and the particular matter, or the composite of them.[37]

Ockham famously concludes that the only kinds of universals are universal concepts, and derivatively universal spoken and written terms.[38]

However, Ockham seems to have (deliberately or not) overlooked a third possibility, precisely the one that will be pursued by Burley in response to Ockham's criticism: there really are extramental universals, but the particular being of individuals and the common being of universals are *really* distinct. In the reformulation of his views, Burley seems to recognize the soundness of the two objections raised by Ockham against moderate realism discussed here, as he then goes on to (i) reject the idea of a relation of identity/distinction other than real identity, and thus the idea that different attributes can be predicated of things that are nevertheless identical; and (ii) dismiss the conflation of the particular being of individuals with the common being of universals; instead he sharply distinguishes these two kinds of being. Indeed, Ockham had hastily concluded that his arguments disproved the possibility of any sort of realism about universals, but in fact these arguments did not attain the form of Platonic realism[39] that Burley went on to develop.

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[36] Ockham, *Summa logicae* I, cap. 16, p. 56: "Et ideo debemus dicere cum philosophis quod in substantia particulari nihil est substantiale penitus nisi forma particularis et materia particularis vel aliquid compositum ex talibus."

[37] As for the semantic issue at the root of the problem of universals, Ockham's rejection of extramental universals does not imply that common terms are meaningless. As we will see below, he will hold that the signification of a (mental, spoken, or written) common term is simply each and every individual that it can be predicated of.

[38] See Ockham, *Summa logicae* I, cap. 15, 53: "Ex quibus aliisque multis patet quod universale est intentio animae nata praedicari de multis."

[39] Burley's alleged "Platonism" is a disputed issue. While some medieval authors leveled this very accusation against him (See, e.g. Paul of Venice, *Expositio super Universalia Porphyrii, capitulum* 2: *de universalibus*, 58, 26–59, 7—I refer to the critical edition with philological introduction by Alessandro D. Conti, available at http://www-static.cc.univaq.it/diri/lettere/docenti/conti/Allegati/Paolo_Veneto/Capitulum2.pdf), Burley himself attempted to dissociate his later position from straightforward Platonism (see E. Karger, "Walter Burley's Realism," *Vivarium* 37 [1999], 24–40), which was then thought to have been entirely refuted by Aristotle. Indeed, Burley's universals exist as extramental entities and their being is not identical to the being of the individuals instantiating them, but they do not occur in a freestanding way, that is, other than insofar as they are instantiated by individuals.

The gist of Burley's later views on universals is that they do exist as extramental entities that are instantiated in individuals, but they are not *constitutive parts* of the latter. Accordingly, there is a fundamental difference between the being of individual primary substances, which combined with a particular portion of matter gives rise to the individual composite, and the being of universal substantial (and accidental) forms. Thus the later Burley endorses Ockham's claim that a particular substance is composed of particular form (primary substance) and particular matter;[40] his disagreement consists in rejecting Ockham's conclusion that there is *nothing else* ontologically speaking (i.e. no common entities), besides particular (substantial) form, particular matter, and particular qualities (Socrate's whiteness, Plato's blackness etc.).

The challenge is now to clarify the relation of individuals to universal forms, which is indeed the greatest challenge for any Platonic view of common natures: if they are really distinct from individuals, what role do they play (if any) for the ontological determination of the being of these individuals? Traditionally, in Platonic views of common natures they also play the role of principles of intelligibility and the condition of possibility for knowledge: but if the being of common forms is so far removed from the being of individuals, can they still yield any sort of knowledge of individuals? The details of how Burley deals with these issues in his later theory of universals need not concern us here, as they are treated elsewhere in this volume[41] as well as in other places.[42] For now, it is sufficient to notice that, according to Burley, common forms "come together" (*concomitans*) with individual essences, making their metaphysical structure apparent to us.

It is in any case clear that Burley's later theory is able to withstand the two objections by Ockham discussed here.[43] Obviously, if individuals and universals are really distinct, then the predicates correctly attributed to an individual need not (and usually do not) apply to the universal it

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[40] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fol. d2vb–d3ra: "Ad primum in contrarium dicendum est quod substantia singularis non componitur ex universalibus, sed solum ex singularibus, quia Sortes non componitur nisi ex hac materia et hac forma, et non componitur ex genere et differentia que predicantur de eo in quid."

[41] See below, Chapter Five, 167–189, and Chapter Seven, 225–246.

[42] Such as Conti, "Ontology," 136–45; and Conti, "La conoscenza del singolare in Walter Burley," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 15 (2004), 517–40.

[43] In fact, in his treatise on universals (*Tractatus de universalibus*, ed. H.-U. Wöhler [Stuttgart: 1999], 28–40), Burley examines these two objections as well as several others similar in spirit, and shows that his theory is able to dissolve each of them.

instantiates, and thus apply even less to the other individuals instantiating the same universal. In other words, Judas's damnation does not transfer over to Jesus, nor does Jesus's salvation transfer over to Judas. For similar reasons, when one individual of a species or genus is annihilated, this does not entail that the species or genus itself (and thus all other individuals instantiating it) is annihilated, simply because common forms are not a constitutive part of individuals.[44]

As we know, Ockham never replied to Burley's reformulation of realism regarding universals. Interestingly, though, Burley's strategy to defend realism against Ockham's objections, namely to adopt a particular form of Platonic realism, did not become very popular in subsequent developments.[45] In fact, later authors such as Wyclif and his followers turned again to the Scotist notion of formal distinction in order to defend a realist view of universals. If nothing else, Burley's later views on universals showed that Ockham had only been able to refute a particular form of realism, not realism per se.[46] But it would seem that later realists were not prepared to trade the quandaries arising from moderate realism for those, possibly more acute, arising from the sort of Platonic realism proposed by Burley.[47]

### 3.2. Categories

The *Categories* is Aristotle's first logical book according to the organization of the *Organon* as we know it; it is something of a borderline text, somewhere between logic and metaphysics. There, ten categories are discussed: substance, quality, quantity, relation, place, time, position, state, action, passion. Clearly, the categories constitute a taxonomical system, but *what* exactly is being classified? Aristotle's text leaves scope for different interpretations,[48] and indeed the debate on how to understand what

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[44] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fol. d3rb: "Ad aliud dicendum quod non oportet quod annihilando individuum annihilaretur species hominis, quia species hominis non est pars Sortis. Unde annihilaretur species hominis, quia species hominis non est pars Sortis. Unde annihilata hac materia et hac forma annihilaretur Sortes, quia Sortes non componitur nisi ex hac materia et hac forma." See also Burley, *Tractatus de universalibus*, 40.

[45] As argued in Conti, "Categories and Universals," 381–82 and 386ff.

[46] As also suggested by Spade, "Ockham's Nominalist Metaphysics" (see n. 27 above).

[47] See footnote 39 above for a reference to Paul of Venice's accusation of Platonism directed at Burley.

[48] See Paul Studtmann, "Aristotle's *Categories*," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (*Fall 2008 Edition*), ed. Edward N. Zalta; available online at http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/aristotle-categories/, section 2.

is being classified was a lively one at different periods of the history of philosophy.

One interpretation has it that the categories are a taxonomy of *words*, and thus above all a semantic system, classifying distinct types of linguistic predicates. On this account, it is a matter of different ways of speaking of entities of the same kind(s), rather than of entities of different kinds. The actual formulation given by Aristotle to what he is dividing into ten categories, *ta legomena* (i.e. "things that are said"), seems to support the linguistic interpretation. However, since antiquity many commentators of Aristotle's text favored an alternative interpretation of the purpose of the ten categories, namely as that of classifying extralinguistic items (i.e. items of the ontology broadly understood). On this account, there are actually ten kinds of ontological items "out there", and these kinds are what each category corresponds to.[49]

In the Latin medieval period up to the mid-13th century, virtually all authors embraced the idea of an isomorphism between language, thought, and reality, in particular with respect to the categories. Thus it was assumed that the ten categories corresponded to real, isomorphic distinctions in these three levels.[50] By the end of the 13th century, however, one of the main discussions on this topic was the issue of the sufficiency and number of the (ten) categories (i.e. whether they exhausted all possibilities for whatever it was that they were meant to classify—words or things), but also whether all ten of them were indeed necessary—in other words, whether the ten categories were necessary *and* sufficient. Such discussions usually took as their starting point the legitimacy of the ten categories as a classification of kinds of predicates;[51] the real issue concerned the number of categories really needed to organize extralinguistic items

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[49] Current scholars also seem to favor this realistic interpretation of Aristotle. See, for instance, M. Frede, "Substance in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*," in *Aristotle on Nature and Living Things*, ed. A. Gotthelf (Pittsburgh: 1985), 17: "Aristotle's ontology is very generous . . . He assumes that the existence of properties does not just amount to the existence of objects which have these properties, but rather that the existence of objects which have properties presupposes the existence both of objects and of properties."

[50] *See* Jorge Gracia and Lloyd Newton, "Medieval Theories of the Categories," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (*Fall 2012 Edition*), ed. Edward N. Zalta, forthcoming; see http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2012/entries/medieval-categories/

[51] Notice, however, that the necessity and sufficiency of the ten categories as a linguistic taxonomy was also a contentious issue. Ockham himself found it difficult to prove—see M. von Perger, "Understanding the Categories by Division: Walter Burley vs. William of Ockham," in *La Tradition Médiévale des Catégories* (*XII^e–XV^e siècles*), ed. J. Biard and I. Rosier-Catach (Leuven: 2003), 37–52, at 45–46.

of the ontology into distinctive kinds. Many authors attempted to "prove" that there are indeed exactly ten categories, such as Thomas Aquinas and Burley himself (for example in the chapter appropriately entitled "*de sufficientia et numero predicamentorum*" of his middle commentary on the categories), usually making use of the method of division.[52]

John Duns Scotus was among the first to question the possibility of deriving the ten categories (i.e. *proving* their sufficiency), thereby challenging the well-entrenched belief in the isomorphism language-thought-being (precisely because he believed that there really were ten categories).[53] It is in this very period that views rejecting the ten categories as real ontological distinctions began to appear (e.g. with Peter John Olivi). The proponents of the view that there are fewer than ten kinds of extralinguistic items often relied on the linguistic interpretation of Aristotle's text, arguing that his intention had been to classify kinds of predicates, not of things, and thus that only a subset of the ten categories were necessary and sufficient for an ontological taxonomy. Yet different authors disagreed on the number of categories needed after all to classify the different kinds of real items. The last six categories were usually treated as a block,[54] and a reduction of the number of categories as ontological kinds usually consisted in focusing on the four first categories and in dismissing the six later categories at once as "merely linguistic" or as reducible to one of the main categories (usually to relation). But among the advocates of such a reduction in this period, the two main positions consisted in the view that only the first three, absolute categories corresponded to real ontological distinctions (such as in Henry of Ghent and the young Burley,[55] and in John Buridan later on); and in the more radical view according to which only substance and quality corresponded to real ontological distinctions,

[52] See von Perger, "Understanding the Categories by Division."

[53] See G. Pini, "Scotus on Deducing Aristotle's Categories," in *La Tradition Médiévale des Catégories*, ed. Biard and Rosier-Catach, 23–36.

[54] The six latter categories have an interesting history in the Middle Ages. Aristotle is extremely brief on them in the *Categories*, so perhaps for this reason the need was felt for a more extensive treatment of them. In the 12th century appeared the *Liber sex principiorum*, whose authorship is still unknown, presenting precisely an extensive treatment of the latter six categories. For our purposes, it is interesting to notice that Burley comments on this book in his last commentaries on the *logica vetus*; this is significant, as it confirms the accentuated importance that these categories (along with relation) acquired in Burley's mature thinking.

[55] See below, Chapter Six, 193–97.

that is, even quantity was dismissed as an ontological category by some authors (such as in Ockham and those following him).[56]

Unlike his views on universals, which changed considerably throughout his career, Burley's earlier and later views on the categories have many points in common: he maintains the same positions with respect to the relation of the ten categories to being and to the determination of what properly belongs in the categories.[57] With respect to the latter, for example, he claims that what is signified by abstract terms (i.e. simple forms such as whiteness and fatherhood), properly falls under the categories, whereas what is signified by concrete accidental terms such as "white" and "father" does not.[58] In other words, accidental forms such as what is signified by "whiteness" are properly classified in one of the categories, but what is signified by "white" (*album*), namely the compound resulting of the inherence of whiteness in some substance, is not to be classified in any of the ten categories. It is a mere aggregate, and can only improperly and reductively be said to belong to the category to which its accidental form belongs.[59] Here, notice that Burley's position differs from that of Ockham: for Ockham, what is signified by "*album*" is in fact the individual substance that has whiteness as one of its qualities, and therefore is indeed to be classified as belonging to one of the categories, namely that of substance.[60]

More important for our purposes, however, are Burley's views on the issue of the sufficiency of the categories, and this for two reasons: this is the main point of dissimilarity between the young and the mature Burley regarding the categories, and also the main point of disagreement with Ockham.[61] Therefore, I will focus on this particular issue.

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[56] Categorical monism, however, was not at all popular. I am aware of only two authors denying substance and remaining only with quality as a "real" category: Thomas Maulevelt (see R. Andrews, "Thomas Maulevelt's Denial of Substance," in *Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Categories*, ed. Newton, 347–67) and Nicholas of Autrecourt (see Hans Thijssen, "Nicholas of Autrecourt," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (*Summer 2009 Edition*), ed. Edward N. Zalta; available online at http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2009/entries/autrecourt/.

[57] As spelled out in Conti, "Walter Burley," and treated elsewhere in this volume, Chapter Six, 191–222.

[58] See below, 202.

[59] See the chapter on relation (*De relatione*) of his middle commentary on the *Categories* (available at http://www-static.cc.univaq.it/diri/lettere/docenti/conti/Allegati/WB_praedicamenta.pdf, in an edition by Alessandro D. Conti).

[60] See § 4.1 below, 74–79.

[61] For other methodological differences between Burley and Ockham regarding the categories, see von Perger, "Understanding the Categories by Division" (n. 51 above), and Conti, "Ockham and Burley" (n. 5 above).

In his earlier writings, Burley seems to maintain a mild form of realism about the ten Aristotelian categories.[62] He seems to defend the view that only the items falling under the absolute categories (substance, quantity, and quality) are real things; the items falling under the other categories are said to be real aspects (*respectus reales*) of the absolute categories.[63] In fact, Burley's middle commentary on the *Categories* presents an overview of different positions but no explicit endorsement of any of them. Nevertheless, a recurrent theme in this text is the idea that items falling under the seven nonabsolute categories do not correspond to real entities but rather to "aspects" of the real entities, namely those falling under one of the three absolute categories.[64] Indeed, in the chapter on relation he again claims that a relation is founded not in a thing but in an aspect of a thing,[65] while in the chapter on qualities he explicitly rejects that the same holds of qualities.[66]

Let us now turn to Ockham. The reduction of the number of ontological categories is one of the most celebrated and widely discussed features of

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[62] See in particular his middle commentary on the *Categories*, written before 1310. Notice that his moderate realism regarding universals does not entail his "mild" realism towards the categories: these are two independent positions.

[63] See below, Chapter Six, 191–222. These three categories are said to be absolute because the *modus essendi* of items falling under them is *secundum se*, that is, in no relation or order to something else, whereas the other seven categories are defined by an extrinsic ordering to something else.

[64] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de sufficientia predicamentorum*, 26, 24–27, 2: "Intelligendum est quod sex predicamenta, scilicet actio, passio, ubi, quando, positio, habitus, sunt nobis multum ignota. Quidam enim dicunt quod illa sex predicamenta non sunt nisi respectus, et non sunt res absolute. Unde dicunt quod duo sunt modi essendi principales. Unus est modus essendi secundum se et absolute, alius est modus essendi in ordine ad aliud. Primus modus essendi convenit tribus predicamentis absolutis, scilicet substantie, qualitati et quantitati; sed modus essendi in ordine ad aliud convenit aliis septem predicamentis. Adhuc modus essendi secundum se et absolute est duplex, quia aut est modus essendi secundum se et in se, et sic est communis substantie, sed non competit aliis predicamentis, et ille est modus proprius predicamento substantie; alius est modus essendi secundum se sed in alio, et est modus proprius duorum accidentium, scilicet quantitatis et qualitatis. Et ille modus non competit aliis predicamentis, sed modus essendi in ordine ad aliud competit aliis septem predicamentis, ita quod alia predicamenta non sunt nisi respectus vel modi reales predicamentorum absolutorum." Burley then goes on to reply to possible objections to this view, giving thus the impression that he endorses it himself.

[65] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de relatione*, 63, 25–26: "Ideo dicendum quod relatio non est eadem res cum suo fundamento; sed relatio est quidam respectus fundatus in re absoluta, ita quod relationes non sunt nisi respectus in absolutis."

[66] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de qualitate et quali*, 78, 27–28: "Et ideo argumentum concludit verum, quod illa que sunt in prima specie qualitatis debent esse absoluta."

Ockham's nominalist ontological program.[67] As we have seen, the young Burley also seemed to endorse some sort of reductionism by maintaining that the nonabsolute categories did not correspond to real things but rather to real *aspects* of things.[68] Ockham, however, takes the reductive program even further in that he reduces the number of real categories to two,[69] namely substance and quality. Moreover, he claims that nothing at all in reality (neither things nor real aspects of things) corresponds to the other eight categories. They are merely different ways of speaking of the two kinds of ontological items that he accepts, namely individual substances and their individual qualities.[70] Ockham is not quarreling with Burley in particular, but more generally with those that he refers to as "*moderni*", as opposed to the venerable "*antiqui*" such as Aristotle and other authoritative authors. Indeed, in a rhetorical strategy to support his position, he attributes it to Aristotle:

> <Aristotle's> opinion is that besides absolute things, i.e. substances and qualities, no other thing is imaginable, neither in act nor in potency. Nevertheless, the same objects are signified by different names in different ways.[71]

Ockham's main reason for the categorical reduction is not, in contrast with his criticism of realism concerning universals, that realism concerning the categories is internally incoherent. Rather, the problem seems to be that this position infringes one of his most cherished methodological principles (known to us as "Ockham's Razor"), to which he gave different formulations—for example: "plurality is not to be posited without necessity".[72] Ockham believes that, for the purposes of metaphysical theorizing and of making sense of our experiences, we simply need not posit the existence of entities corresponding to eight of the categories; positing

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[67] See Spade, "Ockham's Nominalist Metaphysics" (see n. 27 above) and G. Klima, "Ockham's Semantics and Ontology of the Categories," in *The Cambridge Companion to Ockham*, ed. Spade, 118–42.

[68] This suggests that reduction of the categories is not exclusively a "nominalist" position.

[69] Notice, however, that he accepts the real existence of some relations in specific theological contexts—see Spade, "Ockham's Nominalist Metaphysics," 104–05.

[70] One could of course still expect a "proof" of the exhaustiveness of the ten categories as a linguistic taxonomy from Ockham, but he does not seem to address this issue anywhere in his writings—see von Perger, "Understanding the Categories by Division" (see n. 51 above).

[71] Ockham, *Summa logicae* I, cap. 49, 154: "Est autem ista opinio quod praeter res absolutas, scilicet substantias et qualitates, nulla res est imaginabilis, nec in actu nec in potentia. Verumtamen illas easdem res diversa nomina diversimode significant."

[72] See Spade, "Ockham's Nominalist Metaphysics," endnote 13.

the existence of individual substances and individual qualities inherent in the substances is sufficient for these purposes (as he attempts to show with his physical and metaphysical doctrines). And if this is so, then postulating the existence of these other kinds of ontological items would simply go against the principle of theoretical parsimony.

Thus Ockham concludes that the only "real" categories are substance and quality, and that the others are merely linguistic categories, related to the different kinds of questions one may ask about an individual substance.[73] In practice, Ockham's main argumentative strategy in his long discussion of the categories in Part I of the *Summa logicae* (Chapters 40 to 62) is to argue that this is the true Aristotelian position—as we have seen above.[74] Understandably, he devotes a considerable amount of space especially to dismissing quantity (Chapters 44–48) and relation (Chapters 49–54) as corresponding to real ontological distinctions.

As to be expected, Burley was not at all moved by Ockham's arguments. He might prima facie agree with the idea that plurality is not to be posited without necessity, but he would simply deny that the ontological existence of items falling under the eight categories dismissed by Ockham (be they real things or real aspects of these things) are indeed dispensable. Essentially, he seems to believe that we cannot make sense of our knowledge of the world or of the meaningfulness of our language unless we accept the realist ontology: the underlying thesis, which he intends to confirm by the expected explanatory success of his doctrines, is that of the isomorphism between language, thought, and being. Hence, unlike the modifications of Burley's positions concerning universals, the changes with respect to the categories were *not* prompted by his recognition of the cogency of Ockham's arguments.

Rather, what seems to be behind the change from his earlier mild realism to his stronger realism regarding the categories is the revision of his ontology as a whole, to a great extent prompted by the change of his position regarding universals.[75] Moreover, an important factor might have been his rejection of the unacceptable conclusions that can be drawn

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[73] See Ockham, *Summa logicae* I, cap. 41, 116.

[74] This is a strategy often used by Ockham: to rely on his (quite idiosyncratic) interpretation of the texts of the "*antiqui*" (especially, but not only, Aristotle) against the "*moderni*". Burley must have found this "distortion" of the authoritative texts particularly infuriating.

[75] Notice that I do not wish to imply that realism towards universals, or even "Platonic" realism towards universals, necessarily entails realism towards the categories. Rather, Burley's specific form of realism towards universals seems to motivate (but not to entail) his acceptance of the ten categories as real and as really distinct, as argued below.

(e.g. the Ockhamist position) once one begins to question the total isomorphism between language, thought, and being (a position that the young Burley himself flirted with), which led Burley to vehemently reaffirm this isomorphism.

Already in his last commentary on the *Physics* (after 1324), Burley attributes three main faults to Ockham's reduction of the categories: (1) it is entirely against what Aristotle, Porphyry, and other philosophers had intended with the categories in the first place;[76] (2) it seems to trivialize the taxonomical enterprise altogether, as it would imply that ultimately there is only one category, namely that of quality;[77] (3) the supreme genera which each of the ten categories is supposed to be would not be supreme after all, as the eight dismissed categories are merely mental signs for Ockham, and mental signs fall under the category of quality.[78] But while Burley appears to have correctly understood Ockham's arguments against moderate realism regarding universals, his understanding of Ockham's position with respect to the categories seems slightly off the mark.[79] So his replies to Ockham often seem to attack a straw man rather than Ockham's real position.

That the ten categories correspond to actually distinct kinds of extramental items is an integral part of the complex ontology developed by the later Burley—which is described elsewhere in the literature as well as in different chapters of the present volume, so we need not review its details here. Conti has described it as an ontology of "macro-objects" corresponding to what singular terms and definite descriptions signify (specific men, specific horses etc.), but these macro-objects are not basic ontological units:[80] "They are aggregates made up of primary substances together with a host of substantial and accidental forms existing in them and through them. Primary substances and substantial and accidental forms are simple objects or categorial items, each possessing a unique, well-defined nature.

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[76] In his last commentary on the *Categories* (cap: *de numero predicamentorum*), Burley argues in detail against Ockham's views relying on the authority of Aristotle and Boethius.

[77] As already mentioned, this is indeed the conclusion boldly drawn by Thomas Maulevelt, writing after Ockham—see Andrews, "Thomas Maulevelt's Denial of Substance" (see n. 56 above). One may speculate that Ockham's reasons for not going this far might have been essentially theological, just as he accepted entities falling in the category of relation in particular theological contexts.

[78] See Conti, "Ontology," 149.

[79] See A.D. Conti, "Studio storico-critico," in Johannes Sharpe, *Quaestio super universalia*, ed. Alessandro D. Conti (Florence: 1990), 287–94.

[80] Conti, "Walter Burley," section 5. See also Conti, "Ontology," 174–76, and below, Chapter Five, 167–189, and Chapter Six, 191–222.

These simple objects belong to one of ten main types or categories, each really distinct from the others." The details of how these three sorts of items—primary substance, substantial forms, and accidental forms—come together to form the macro-object are again not our main concern here. Suffice it to notice that the substantial and accidental forms are universals having real existence, while primary substances are composed of particular forms and particular matters. It now becomes obvious why realism concerning universals motivates realism concerning the categories: universals simply *are* what is classified by means of the ten categories (i.e. substantial and accidental forms).[81] So the items falling under each category are full-fledged extramental simple objects, and thus not only real aspects of objects (as the young Burley maintained for the seven non-absolute categories).

Moreover, not only do they all really exist, but they also really differ from each other: "it must be noticed that the ten categories, i.e. substance, quantity etc., are really distinct".[82] In theory, Burley could have held that, while substantial and accidental forms really exist (as universals), they are not necessarily to be sorted in ten really distinct categories: but his realism regarding the categories concerns the existence as well as the real distinction of the items falling under each category. The arguments he gives for the necessity and sufficiency of the ten categories as ontological kinds are essentially based on the method of binary division,[83] but in fact such a method can never guarantee exhaustiveness, as further subdivisions can always be added. Nevertheless, it is of use in order to show that the ten categories correspond to really different kinds of beings (*entia*).

In short, the development of Burley's position regarding the categories can be described as follows: he maintained a mild sort of reductionism in his early years, but his vehement rejection of Ockham's reductionist program as well as the general revision of his ontology prompted by his later ultrarealism regarding universals (which in turn essentially derived from Ockham's criticism of moderate realism) led him to an ultrarealism regarding the categories as well.

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[81] Notice though that a primary substance is not a universal; it is a categorial item belonging to the category of substance.

[82] Burley, *Exposio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *De numero predicamentorum*, fol. dıra: "Ulterius est videndum an illa decem predicamenta, scilicet substantia, quantitas etc., sunt realiter distincta."

[83] See von Perger, "Understanding the Categories by Division" (see n. 51 above).

### 3.3. Physics

Let me now briefly discuss some aspects of the Burley–Ockham debate with respect to physics, and this for two main reasons: (i) their disagreements on universals and especially on the categories had significant repercussions on their respective systems of natural philosophy; (ii) the debate on physics is particularly relevant for our purposes in that "it illustrates [particularly well] the complexity of the Burley–Ockham interaction".[84]

Burley's works in physics exemplify again his prolific writing style. It is now believed that there are three authentic *Physics* commentaries by Burley, the most important being the last post-1324 commentary, *In Physicam Aristotelis expositio et quaestiones*, where he reacts to the contents of Ockham's *Expositio in libros Physicorum* (written shortly before that). In practice, Burley often reuses significant portions of his own earlier physics commentaries, but often expands them so as to include references to Ockham.[85]

In Burley's last *Physics* commentary, the complex interaction between the two authors is marked by Burley's usual sharp criticism of Ockham's views, but also by a surprising tendency to take parts of Ockham's *Expositio in libros Physicorum* as the basis for his own text. According to Wood,[86] for Books III–V and VII Burley generally preferred to work with Ockham's exposition as a base rather than his own earlier commentary.[87] What was going on? Had Burley at least partially acquiesced to Ockham's views? Most certainly not, especially considering that the Prologue of his last *Physics* commentary is one of Burley's most vehement attacks at Ockham's positions. Rather, what seems to have happened is that Burley acknowledged Ockham as having aptly "translated" Aristotle's original arguments into the 14th-century style of argumentation—after all, both books were expositions of Aristotle's *Physics*. So they might disagree on doctrines, but here Burley seems to acknowledge Ockham as a respectable reader of Aristotle.

As argued by Wood (in her essay on Burley's *Physics* commentaries), with this practice Burley effectively promoted the dissemination of Ockham's views; Burley's last *Physics* commentary subsequently became very

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[84] Rega Wood, personal communication, 10 April 2008.

[85] For a general account of Burley's works in physics, see Rega Wood, "Walter Burley's *Physics* Commentaries," *Franciscan Studies* 44 (1984), 275–327.

[86] See Wood, "Walter Burley's *Physics* Commentaries," 294.

[87] Wood ("Walter Burley's *Physics* Commentaries," Appendix 6) provides a list of parallel passages where Burley noncritically borrows from Ockham's text.

popular, so we can speculate that it was through this text that a significant portion of its readership was first exposed to Ockham's views, even if they were severely criticized by Burley.

While the disagreements between Burley and Ockham on the topic of natural philosophy essentially all stem from what, in simplistic terms, can be described as the realist–nominalist dichotomy, their complexity does not allow me to treat them in detail here.[88] Here, I will briefly comment on one particular aspect, which is directly related to the earlier discussion on the categories.

As we have seen, Ockham only accepts substance and quality as actually existing ontological sorts. But his parsimonious ontology often forces him into a considerable amount of gymnastics when dealing with natural philosophy, in particular concerning his denial of quantity. The absence of the seven nonabsolute categories (relation and the six categories that can be derived from it) is less acutely felt in this context, but physics without quantity is quite a challenge, which Ockham gladly (but not always easily) takes up.

One specific issue, discussed in detail by Rega Wood,[89] is the issue of motion in a vacuum, presented by Burley in his analysis of Aristotle's *Physics*, Book IV, Chapter 8, t.c. 71, in his last *Physics* commentary. The basic question is whether motion as we conceive it (i.e. taking place in an interval of time) could occur in a vacuum—provided, of course, that a vacuum could at least in theory occur.[90] If there is no matter (as follows from the definition of vacuum), then presumably the moving body encounters no resistance, and so its "movement" would be indivisible and instantaneous—that is, it would not constitute motion properly speaking. The general assumption is that motion presupposes some sort of resistance so as to take place in time instead of instantaneously.

Both Ockham and Burley ultimately want to conclude that (successive) motion in a vacuum is at least in theory possible. But Burley can rely on his acceptance of pure quantity as an ontological possibility, while for

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[88] For an account of the main themes of Burley's physics, see Chapters *Eight, Nine*, and *Ten* in this volume; for Ockham, see A. Goddu, *The Physics of William Ockham* (Leiden: 1984), and for a shorter exposition, *Goddu*, "Ockham's Philosophy of Nature," in *The Cambridge Companion to Ockham*, ed. Spade, 143–67.

[89] See R. Wood, "Walter Burley on Motion in a Vacuum," *Traditio* 45 (1989–90), 191–217.

[90] Contrary to the currently received view, according to which medieval authors in general did not believe a vacuum to be possible, quite a few medieval authors believed that a vacuum was at least a theoretical possibility—see Wood, "Walter Burley on Motion" (n. 89 above).

Ockham quantity is nothing apart from substance or quality. So Burley can construe a vacuum as pure, separated quantity; he then goes on to explain how separated quantity can resist motion, and thus how motion in a vacuum (pure quantity) is possible. Ockham, by contrast, must resort to the much less plausible (and at odds with authoritative authors such as Averroes) theory of *sola distancia*, that is, the idea that, since there is some space between the boundaries circumscribing the vacuum area, distance alone is sufficient to account for succession in motion. Burley, of course, severely criticizes Ockham's solution to the problem,[91] which for him only goes on to show the preposterousness of Ockham's reductive ontological program.

### 3.4. *Ontology: Conclusion*

Without a doubt, the core of the Burley–Ockham disagreements is to be found in their respective views on universals and categories. As we have seen, in the first stage of his career Burley held a moderate realism on these and other ontological matters; but when confronted with Ockham's criticism of moderate realism in general (but in particular of Scotus's positions), Burley saw it fit to revise substantially his own earlier positions. Regarding universals, he seemed to believe that Ockham was fundamentally right, and therefore that moderate realism was untenable; regarding the categories, he seemed to believe that Ockham was entirely wrong, and thus that any trace of categorial nonrealism was to be vehemently rejected.[92]

## 4. *Logic*

The Burley–Ockham quarrels on logical matters are essentially related to their ontological disagreements, and this in both directions. On the one hand, in both authors ontological considerations play a significant role in the determination of some key semantic concepts; on the other hand, it is arguably the very need to guarantee the meaningfulness of language

[91] See the text in Wood, "Walter Burley on Motion."

[92] However, notice again that realism about universals does not necessitate realism about the categories, and vice versa; these are two independent (albeit related) positions. One could in theory be a realist about universals and a "nominalist" (reductionist) about the categories (as the young Burley), or a nominalist about universals and a realist about the categories, that is, if one maintains that all ten categories correspond strictly to individual but really existing (substantial or accidental) properties.

(as we know it) that compels Burley to maintain realist views on universals and the categories. For Ockham, however, a parsimonious ontology can just as well account for the meaningfulness of language, which for him illustrates that a realist ontology is superfluous. Now, an examination of their respective notions of signification is essential for a better understanding of this dispute, in particular regarding its ontological assumptions, so this will be the first topic of this section.

Furthermore, in contrast with their diametrically opposed ontological views, when it comes to logic and semantics the Burley–Ockham interaction is characterized by negative as well as positive influence. In particular, Ockham essentially borrows Burley's entire theory of supposition, minus the points of inconsistency related to their respective ontological positions. Given its significance, supposition theory will thus be the second point of analysis in this section.

Finally, we will briefly examine the different views on consequence held by Ockham and Burley. Consequence does not play a fundamental role in their overall disagreements, but the differences between the two theories represent a crucial step in the development of theories of consequence, namely the passage from theories based on the natural vs. accidental consequences dichotomy to theories based on the formal vs. material consequences dichotomy.

Another important point of dissimilarity between the Burley–Ockham disputes in logic and in ontology is that Ockham's criticism of the general realist logical position (i.e. a logic resting on a realist ontology) did not provoke a fundamental revision on Burley's part, as was the case for ontology. As is well known, the longer version of Burley's *Purity of the Art of Logic* was meant as a reaction to Ockham's views; nevertheless, the shorter and the longer versions do not present fundamentally different logical theories.[93] Rather, the longer version simply contains discussions and rebuttals of some of Ockham's views.

### 4.1. *Signification*

One of the basic tenets of later Latin medieval semantics, essentially taken over from Aristotle (*De Interpretatione*, 16a 3–8) and Boethius (commenting on this passage), and held by virtually every medieval author, is the threefold division of language into concepts, spoken words, and written

[93] Notice though that the two versions do not overlap entirely: there are many topics present in the longer version that are not treated at all in the shorter version.

words.[94] There was, however, disagreement concerning the mutual relations between these three levels of language as well as concerning the relations between these linguistic items and nonlinguistic extramental entities, be they particular or universal entities.[95] More exactly, up to Ockham the picture of these relations is reasonably homogeneous, but it is again Ockham who comes to disrupt the received view.[96]

In general, authors used the term "*significatio*" to refer to the property that linguistic entities had insofar as they entertained a special relationship to (being the signs of) some specific items of the ontology, be they linguistic or nonlinguistic entities. The term itself is etymologically related to the term "sign" (*signus*), and, crucially, it is how Boethius translated the Greek term "*semeion*" in *De interpretatione* 16b 19–21. From the same key passage (in Boethius's translation) comes the usual definition of what it is to signify: it is to establish the understanding (*constituere intellectum*) of a thing.

Roughly described, the traditional Boethian view on the signification of linguistic items has it that written terms signify spoken terms, and that these in turn signify concepts, which are also linguistic items on this view. Concepts, not written and spoken words, are the linguistic items entertaining a special relation of signification with other items of the ontology, and written and spoken words are related to the latter only insofar as they signify concepts. Moreover, some concepts signify individual entities, usually viewed as primary substances according to the traditional Aristotelian ontology, whereas other concepts are related to common or general properties of individual things, and thus are usually said to signify universal entities (typically secondary substances and the accidents belonging to the nine accidental categories).

This traditional view is very much the one adopted by Burley in his early writings (such as his treatise on supposition and his two commentaries on *De Interpretatione*) as well as in his later writings (*De Puritate* and his last *Logica vetus* commentary).[97] In fact, Burley tends to give it a "realist" interpretation in that he insists on the relation of signification

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[94] See for example Burley's middle commentary on *De Interpretatione*, edited by S.F. Brown, "Walter Burley's Middle Commentary on Aristotle's *Perihermeneias*," *Franciscan Studies* 33 (1973), 45–134, § 1.02.

[95] For an overview of this tradition see P.V. Spade, *Thoughts, Words and Things*, Chapter 3; available at www.pvspade.com

[96] A possible predecessor of Ockham's modified notion of signification is Roger Bacon, in his *De Signis*.

[97] See Chapter Three in this volume, especially section 2.1.

between words and extramental things, thus downplaying the mediating role of concepts.[98] He concludes for example that "this term 'man' signifies an extra-mental thing which is not one in number but is one in terms of species";[99] he adds that "the thing signified by 'man' is a quidditive part and a universal whole of Socrates".[100] In short, for Burley, the signification of a common term such as "man" is exactly the corresponding universal, in this particular case the species humanity. Indeed, the existence of such universals (be it according to his early moderate realism or according to his later extreme realism) is precisely what guarantees the meaningfulness of common terms as well as their crucial epistemic function.

Given his denial of extramental universal entities, Ockham could obviously not accept the traditional definition of signification, in particular regarding the signification of common terms. Insofar as signification (with or without the mediation of concepts) is a relation between linguistic entities and particular items of the ontology, Ockham must find a suitable second relatum for the (reformulated) relation of signification within his ontology—in the case of common terms more specifically, but in fact for all kinds of terms. As we have seen, Ockham's ontology is composed exclusively of individual entities—expressly not allowing for extramental universals—namely individual substances (Socrates, Plato) and their individual qualities (Socrates's whiteness, Plato's blackness). Thus, for Ockham, the relation of signification becomes the relation between a (written, spoken, mental) term and all the things it can be correctly predicated of, namely the individuals in question—anachronistically put, a term signifies each and every object belonging to its extension. He insists that the view of the *moderni* (such as Burley) is simply wrong in this respect:

> It is thus patent that those are wrong who say that the word "man" does not signify all men. The universal term "man", according to the aforementioned authority <that is: John Damascene>, signifies many things; but it does not signify many things which are not men, it must signify many men. This point must be granted, for nothing is signified by "man" except men, and not one man more than another.[101]

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[98] See for example *quaestio* 1 in his *Questions on the Perihermeneias*, in particular §§ 1.7 and 1.7.1.

[99] See Burley, *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.8.2.

[100] See Burley, *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.8.2.1. Here we clearly perceive the outlines of Burley's early ontology.

[101] Ockham, *Summa logicae* I, cap. 33, 96: "Ex quo patet quod errant illi qui dicunt quod haec vox 'homo' non significat omnes homines. Cum enim hoc universale 'homo', secundum praefatum Doctorem, significet plura, et non significet plures res quae non sunt

There are many important details of Ockham's conception of signification that must be borne in mind, but which we cannot discuss here for reasons of space. Notice though that in Chapter 33 he introduces two notions of signification, one that concerns the individuals actually existing at some point in time, and one that extends the relation of signification to past, future, and possible things of which the term signifying could be correctly predicated. Also, notice that, as with Burley, Ockham diminishes the mediating role of concepts for signification: spoken and written terms signify directly, albeit conventionally, the same things that the concepts that they are subordinated to signify naturally.

In the first, short version of his *On the Purity*, Burley concentrates on general rules of inference and syncategoremata, thus not discussing properties of terms such as signification and supposition at all.[102] The motivation for writing a second, longer version of *On the Purity* (which nevertheless incorporates substantial parts of the shorter treatise) seems to have been precisely the appearance of Ockham's *Summa logicae*. Indeed, in the longer version Burley explicitly discusses and rejects Ockham's "idiosyncratic" views on the properties of terms, in particular signification and supposition. *On the Purity* does not have a specific chapter for signification, but he discusses it in connection with the concepts of simple and personal supposition (see the next section). The heart of the matter is that, according to the traditional view, *simple* supposition is the supposition of a term for what it signifies, namely universals in the case of common terms. For Ockham, however, *personal* supposition is the supposition of a term for what it signifies; in short, their disagreements concerning the definitions of supposition all stem from their disagreement concerning the notion of signification.

In Chapter 3 of the first treatise (on the properties of terms) of the longer version of *De Puritate*,[103] Burley presents a series of counterarguments to the Ockhamist notion of signification, for example with an appeal to Aristotle's authority:

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homines, oportet quod significet plures homines. Quod concedendum est, quia nihil significatur per hominem nisi homo, et non plus unus homo quam alius."

[102] According to Philotheus Boehner—see his "Introduction", ix, in Burley, *De puritate artis logicae. Tractus longior*, with a revised edition of the *Tractatus brevior*, ed. Ph. Boehner (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: 1955)—he seems to have planned to discuss properties of terms as well, but the shorter version remained incomplete.

[103] For Burley's *De puritate* I directly quote Spade's translation: Burley, *Purity of the Art of Logic, The Shorter and the Longer Treatises*, translated by P.V. Spade (New Haven: 2000).

> But that is without a doubt a very unreasonable thing to say. For in "Man is a species", insofar as it is true, the term "man" supposits for its significate. I prove this as follows: For it is certain that, according to the Philosopher in the *Categories* (5 2a11–19), "man" is the name of a second substance; therefore, the term "man" signifies a second substance. And it does not signify a second substance that is a genus. Therefore, it signifies a species. Therefore, taking "man" for what it signifies, "Man is a species" will be true, because the name "man" is the name of a species and signifies a species.[104]

Burley presents other arguments with various degrees of argumentative success. Some of them are philosophically interesting, but not entirely successful in attacking Ockham's theory, such as:

> Again, according to this way of speaking, the name "man" signifies Socrates when Socrates exists, and when Socrates is dead it does not signify Socrates, because then Socrates is not a man. Therefore, whenever anyone dies, the name "man" would fall away from its significate. And so it follows that anyone who destroys some real thing would make an utterance fall away from its significate. This is absurd.[105]

Ockham could easily reply to this objection by an appeal to his wider notion of signification, according to which "man" signifies not only those entities of whom at present the term "man" can be predicated, but also those past, future, and possible entities of whom this is the case as well. But along the same lines, one could object the following: suppose that everything which is now white could also be black and vice versa; then "white" and "black" would have the same wider, counterfactual extension, while clearly they do not have the same signification.[106] Ockham could reply to this objection relying on his notion of connotation: "black" and "white" still have a different signification because the former connotes blackness while the latter connotes whiteness, but not vice versa. A similar issue concerns terms with empty extension even in the wider sense (i.e. names of impossible objects such as "chimera" and "round square"): Ockham's reply might be that they have the same wider extension, namely an empty extension, but with different connotations.

Burley's more poignant arguments in fact concern the epistemological dimension of Ockham's notion of signification. For example, if a common term "man" signifies Socrates and Plato, he who hears and understands the term thereby comes to understand Socrates the individual, and this is

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[104] Burley, *Purity of the Art of Logic*, 87 (= Latin text, 7).
[105] Burley, *Purity of the Art of Logic*, 90 (= Latin text, 9).
[106] See Spade, *Thoughts, Words and Things*, 151.

false according to Burley (§ 33 of Chapter 3). Similarly, he who imposed the term "man" to signify what it does "did not know me or John who is now present" (§ 34 of Chapter 3), so he could not possibly have imposed "man" to signify every individual man. Nevertheless, the Ockhamist still has resources to reply to such objections,[107] in such a way that none of Burley's arguments actually disproves the Ockhamist notion of signification. At best, Burley's arguments show that the extensional notion of signification conflicts with some facts that we might prima facie prefer to take as true (in particular insofar as we follow the authorities), but not that it is inconsistent or that it fails to explain fundamental semantic properties of terms.

But then again, Ockham's critique of the traditional notion of signification is also not motivated by purely semantic considerations. Rather, what is again at the root of the disagreement is the status of universals and Ockham's denial of their extramental existence in his ontology populated exclusively by individual beings. So the debate on the notion of signification remains inconclusive, with no clear winner.

### 4.2. *Supposition*

Regarding supposition, the Burley–Ockham interplay is multifaceted. We have seen that their disagreement on the notion of signification is essentially an ontological divergence; concerning supposition, they will again disagree insofar as their ontological differences are at stake, but otherwise Burley's and Ockham's respective theories of supposition are remarkably similar. In short, here we have a pattern of negative as well as positive influence, and arguably in both directions.

Indeed, as argued by Brown (in his introduction to the edition of Burley's *De Suppositionibus*), it is patent that Ockham's theory of supposition as presented in his *Summa logicae* resembles Burley's theory in his early treatise *De suppositionibus* more than it resembles any of the main 13th-century theories of supposition, such as William of Sherwood's or Peter of Spain's. One could still argue that Burley might not have been Ockham's main source, but rather that those ideas were simply "in the air" in the first decades of the 14th century in England. However, the fact that Chapter 76 of the *Summa logicae*, Part I, on the supposition of relatives, is almost a

[107] Ibid., 153–55.

verbatim copy of the section on the same topic in Burley's treatise, seems to indicate that Burley specifically may have been Ockham's main source.

The general spirit of Ockham's theory of supposition, representing a unification of the different properties of terms that still played an important role in the 13th century (*appellatio, copulatio* etc.) is certainly to be found in Burley's treatise as well. Similarly, the general definition of supposition, in particular as a property of terms *in propositions*, is present in both authors but not in most 13th-century theories. Many of the subdivisions of the different kinds of supposition are also common to both authors, although Burley has a tendency towards multiplying subdivisions (in particular of simple and material supposition) that Ockham does not share. But generally, both theories would yield the same outcome when determining the possible kinds of supposition for terms in a given proposition, as well as when evaluating which kind of supposition would render the proposition true. For example, both theories would agree that, in "A man is running", "man" can only have personal supposition, while in "Man is a species" "man" can have personal as well as simple supposition (i.e. the proposition must be distinguished), and that only in the latter case will the proposition be true.

As for their differences, the foremost divergence concerns the definitions of personal and simple supposition, which in turn crucially depends on the different notions of signification just discussed. For Burley, a term having simple supposition supposits for its significate, namely a universal in the case of common terms, while a term having personal supposition supposits for its inferiors (i.e. the individuals that instantiate the universal it signifies). For Ockham, by contrast, supposition for the significates of a term occurs in the case of *personal* supposition, precisely because he considers the individuals that Burley views as instantiating the universal as the very significates of the common term in question. So Ockham and Burley agree extensionally on what a term supposits for if it has personal supposition, but they disagree on the status of such things (i.e. whether they *are* the significates of the common term or whether they *instantiate* the significate of the common term). A similar pattern occurs with simple supposition: Ockham and Burley roughly agree extensionally on what a term supposits for if it has simple supposition, as for Ockham simple supposition is related to the only kind of universal he accepts in his ontology, namely mental common terms. But for Ockham simple supposition is not defined by signification but by subordination: a term supposits simply if it supposits for the mental term to which it is subordinated.

Again, this is not really a semantic debate, as Burley and Ockham almost always converge when it comes to determining the kind(s) of supposition that a term can have in a given proposition as well as the nature of the things supposited for (minus their ontological differences). The points of divergence between the two theories ultimately all stem from ontological disagreements—such as, for example, Burley's notion of formal supposition (as opposed to material supposition),[108] which is then subdivided into simple and personal supposition: in both cases it is clear that some *form* is involved, either as the form itself (simple supposition) or as the individuals instantiating the form (personal supposition).[109] For Ockham, however, neither personal nor simple supposition has anything to do with forms, so while he maintains the personal-simple-material trichotomy, there is no mention of formal supposition.

### 4.3. *Consequence*

Both Burley and Ockham have played a crucial role in the development of 14th-century theories of consequence, which are rightly seen as one of the most interesting later medieval developments in logic.[110] Indeed, Burley is the author of the earliest *De consequentiis* treatise[111] whose authorship has been determined (there are two earlier anonymous treatises). While this treatise is rather simple, the theory of consequences presented in both versions of *De Puritate* contains all the basic rules of propositional logic currently recognized, as well as interesting analyses of term-related

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[108] Burley seems to have taken over the formal vs. material supposition opposition straight from Sherwood, as no other major 13th-century author speaks explicitly of this opposition.

[109] Moreover, following a long tradition (Irène Rosier-Catach, "La *suppositio materialis* et la question de l'autonymie au Moyen Age," in *Parler des mots, Le fait autonymique en discours*, ed. J. Authier-Revuz, M. Doury, and S. Reboul-Touré [Paris: 2003], 21–55), Burley applies the formal-material distinction to explain the meaningfulness of terms by means of the notion of imposition—see Cesalli's chapter on meaning and truth in this volume, especially 105–08. As argued by Cesalli, his notions of formal and material supposition seem fundamentally related to this account of the significative character of a term. Ockham, by contrast, has a very different account of the signification of a term, making no appeal to matter or form when speaking of imposition, which may explain why he retained the notion of material supposition but not that of formal supposition.

[110] See Catarina Dutilh Novaes, 'Medieval theories of Consequence'. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2012 Edition)*, ed. Edward N. Zalta; see http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/consequence-medieval.

[111] Edited in N.J. Green-Pedersen, "Walter Burley's *De Consequentiis*," *Franciscan Studies* 40 (1980), 102–66.

properties of consequences.[112] But Burley's theory of consequence is at the same time firmly saddled in typical 13th-century ideas, such as the distinction between natural and accidental consequences (*De Puritate—Tractatus longior*, § 254) and the grounding of all (valid) consequences on dialectical topics (*De Puritate—Tractatus longior*, § 321). These are the two points that I will briefly discuss here, as these are the points with respect to which the dissimilarities with Ockham's theory of consequence are particularly significant.

The natural vs. accidental distinction was the main distinction of consequences in the 13th century.[113] Burley's presentation of the distinction is rather brief, and he does not make much of it in the rest of his discussion. For Burley, these two kinds of consequences are a subdivision of simple (as opposed to as-of-now) consequence, and the latter distinction is indeed more relevant for his purposes. What he does say (*De Puritate—Tractatus longior*, § 254) is that in natural consequences the "antecedent includes the consequent" and that these consequences hold "through an intrinsic topic". He does not provide examples of natural consequences, but presumably a consequence such as "Socrates is a man, thus Socrates is an animal" is a natural consequence holding in virtue of the topic "what belongs to the species belongs to the genus" or the like. Accidental consequences, by contrast, do not display the property of containment of the consequent in the antecedent, and hold "through a certain extrinsic rule". The example of an accidental consequence provided is presented as an instance of the *ex impossibili* rule: "If a man is an ass, you are sitting." It is said to hold in virtue of the topic "from the less".

At any rate, according to Burley, both kinds of consequences, and in fact all consequences, are valid in virtue of a topical rule: "Every good consequence holds through some topic that is a maximal proposition. For a maximal proposition is nothing but a rule through which a consequence holds" (*De Puritate—Tractatus longior*, § 341). While an extensive discussion of the topical framework falls out of the scope of the present study,[114] it is important to notice that assigning topical grounding to consequences was a traditional position, dating back to Boethius, and widely held in the

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[112] See Catarina Dutilh Novaes, "Fourteenth Century Logic after Ockham," in *The Handbook of the History of Logic*, ed. D. Gabbay and J. Woods, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: 2008), 433–504.

[113] See C.J. Martin, "Formal Consequence in Scotus and Ockham: Towards an Account of Scotus' Logic," in *1302: Duns Scot à Paris 1302–2002, Actes du colloque de Paris, septembre 2002*, ed. O. Boulnois, E. Karger, J.-L. Solre, and G. Sondag (Turnhout: 2005), 117–50.

[114] For this purpose, see N.J. Green-Pedersen, *The Tradition of the Topics in the Middle Ages* (Munich: 1984).

12th and 13th centuries. However, after Burley, topical grounding for consequences tends to disappear, being indeed entirely absent in influential 14th-century theories of consequences such as Buridan's and Billingham's. Now, the first step towards the elimination of topical grounding seems to have been taken by Ockham.

Ockham's theory of consequence, presented in Part III–3 of his *Summa logicae*, represents something of a transitional stage between 13th-century approaches and the quintessential 14th-century approaches, but it constitutes a step forward towards the 14th century if compared to Burley's. One very important contribution by Ockham is the introduction of the formal vs. material opposition with respect to consequences: he is the first to use it systematically, and after him it is present in virtually every theory of consequence, the only exception (to my knowledge) being the theory in the longer version of *De Puritate* (presumably written after Ockham's *Summa logicae*). Significantly, Ockham presents nine subdivisions of consequences, but seems to deliberately ignore the natural vs. accidental distinction. C.J. Martin speculates on the reasons for Ockham's dismissal of the natural vs. accidental distinction with respect to consequences, and suggests that it was related to his dismissal of Scotus's notion of formal distinction.[115] Be that as it may, Ockham's formal vs. material distinction managed to replace entirely the natural vs. accidental distinction. If Martin is correct, then Ockham was polarizing with Scotus, not with Burley, but again this had an impact on Burley's theory and its future influence. Notice however that the two distinctions are not extensionally equivalent: some consequences that Burley would classify as accidental (valid in virtue of an extrinsic topic) are nevertheless formal consequences for Ockham, even though all of Burley's natural consequences are indeed formal consequences for Ockham.

Ockham's distinction between formal and material consequences is a disputed matter, as the text where it is introduced is far from transparent. For the present purposes, it is sufficient to notice the reminiscent topical traits in the definitions: formal consequences are those valid in virtue of an intrinsic or extrinsic middle (the concept of "middle" ultimately originating from the topical framework, but having undergone significant changes),[116] while material consequences are valid in virtue of the "meaning of the terms". It is thus also clear that Ockham deliberately intends his formal vs. material distinction *not* to coincide with the natural

[115] See Martin, "Formal Consequence in Scotus and Ockham," 135–37.
[116] See Green-Pedersen, *The Tradition of the Topics in the Middle Ages*, Part E.

vs. accidental distinction, as in the latter the criterion of differentiation (as presented by Burley) is whether the grounding topic is intrinsic or extrinsic. Moreover, while he uses the modified topical concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic middles, nowhere does Ockham explicitly assign topical grounding to all valid consequences as Burley does.

In short, the differences between Burley's and Ockham's respective theories of consequences represent precisely these two fundamental aspects in the development of such theories, namely the replacement of the natural vs. accidental opposition by the formal vs. material opposition, and the dismissal of topical grounding as the ultimate ground for valid consequences. Notice however that, with respect to consequences, neither Ockham nor Burley seems to have explicitly polemicized against each other.

## 5. *Conclusion*

We have seen that the core of the Burley–Ockham dispute is really their divergence concerning the ontological status of universals: merely mental terms for Ockham vs. entities with extramental independent (but not freestanding) existence for (the later) Burley. More specifically, Ockham's criticism of the sort of moderate realism endorsed by the young Burley led the latter to revise his positions and to formulate a more extreme form of realism regarding universals. It is concerning universals that their respective central assumptions—Ockham's denial and Burley's endorsement of a structural isomorphism between language, thought, and reality—is most acutely felt.

PART TWO

# THE LOGICIAN AND METAPHYSICIAN

CHAPTER THREE

# MEANING AND TRUTH

Laurent Cesalli[1]

## *Introduction*

One of the constants in Walter Burley's long and rich life was his interest in logic: his first and last extant works deal with logical matters and Burley shows the same pugnacity in commenting on Aristotle's *De interpretatione* in his late years as he did as a young Mertonian at the turn of the century. True, Burley's works on natural and practical philosophy attest that, in his view, philosophy cannot possibly be reduced to logic. But the questions of meaning and truth—that is, the logical questions *par excellence*—obviously remained the focus of his intellectual preoccupation.[2] The reason for that might be Burley's realistic view according to which logic is not, as the nominalist would claim, a mere science of language, but always possesses "ontological import": the logical structures present in thought and expressed by language reflect relations between things in the (nonlinguistic) world. Thus, as Alessandro Conti puts it, Burley presents us with "a kind of identification of logic and metaphysics".[3] We will begin this survey of Burley's notions of meaning and truth by considering his conception of logic, before turning to his semantics of terms and, finally, of propositions.

[1] Many thanks to Alessandro Conti, Frédéric Goubier, Joël Lonfat, and James Schutz for their careful proofreading of the text and their remarks. Although they substantially helped to improve the manuscript, they are of course not at all responsible for its (remaining) shortcomings.

[2] Although we do not know exactly how many works Burley actually wrote, a rough counting yields a significant picture: three-quarters of Burley's writings deal with logic. See Marta Vittorini's contribution in the present volume (above, 46–47) as well as Jennifer Ottman and Rega Wood, "Walter of Burley: His Life and Works," *Vivarium* 37.1 (1999), 1–23.

[3] Alessandro D. Conti, "Significato e verità in Walter Burley," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 11 (2000), 317–50, at 318, as well as Conti, "Walter Burley," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2011 Edition)*, ed. E.N. Zalta; available online at http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/burley/.

## 1. *Logic*

In the general prologue of the *Ars vetus*[4] Burley considers three questions about logic in general (*circa logicam in communi*): what is the unity, the subject matter, and the utility of logic? Burley answers the first question in two steps, characterizing the type of unity proper to logic as well as its objects as unifying principles.

### 1.1. *The Unity and the Objects of Logic*

Concerning the first point—logic has parts, but what is their unifying principle?—Burley distinguishes two kinds of unity characterizing logic: an aggregative unity (*unitas secundum aggregationem*), that is, the one in virtue of which an army or a city is said to be one; and a connective unity (*unitas connexionis*), that is, the one in virtue of which species of the same genus are said to be one. The connective unity reinforces the aggregative one, making logic more than the mere juxtaposition of disparate elements by providing an internal coherence to its parts. This generic or connective unity is reflected by the fact that there are relations of dependence between the different parts of logic—thus, for example, the *Posterior Analytics* presuppose the *Prior Analytics*. But the explanation of this connective unity is given in terms of the objects of logic (*de quibus est logica*). The different parts of logic form a unity because they consider objects of the same kind. These are, according to the Avicennian saying, "second intentions joined to first intentions" (*logica est de secundis intentionibus adiunctis primis*).[5] But how are we to understand that? An intention (*intentio*), first of all, is a concept of a thing (*conceptus rei*); but there are two kinds of concepts: primary concepts ($C_1$), for example the

[4] See Burley, *Expositio super Porphyrii Isagogen* (hereafter, *In Porph.*), *prologus*, in *Expositio super Artem Veterm Porphyrii et Aristotelis* (Venetiis: 1497; repr. Frankfurt: 1967), fols. a2ra–a3rb. As is well known, this work is the last important set of logical commentaries by Burley, completed in 1337 and containing commentaries on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, Aristotle's *Categories*, and *De interpretatione* as well as on the anonymous *Liber sex principiis*. For a transcription of the text of the general prologue of the *Super artem veterem*, see Laurent Cesalli, "Logique et topique chez Gauthier Burley," in *Le syllogisme topique*, ed. Joël Biard and Fosca Mariani Zini (forthcoming)—the text is given as an appendix.

[5] See Avicenna, *Liber de philosophia prima* 1.2, ed. Simone von Riet (Leiden: 1977), 10. This definition of the objects of logic is common in the Middle Ages. It is found for instance in Roger Bacon and Robert Kilwardby. On this topic, see Katherine Tachau, *Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham* (Leiden: 1988), 12–14 and Alessandro D. Conti, "Second Intentions in the Late Middle Ages," in *Mediaeval Analysis in Language and Cognition*, ed. Sten Ebbesen and Russell Friedmann (Copenhagen: 1999), 453–70.

concept of man[6] resulting from the grasping of human nature as such (*absolute*), that is, when I understand that a man is an animated, sensible, and rational substance; secondary concepts ($C_2$), for example the concept of man resulting from the grasping of human nature as compared to the individuals who participate in it, that is, when I understand that Plato and Socrates are men. Now, $C_2$ is abstracted from $C_1$, and $C_1$ is abstracted from individual things (in our case: individual men); further, Burley calls $C_1$ a first, and $C_2$ a second intention. In short, when I think of men in terms of their definition, what I have in mind is a first intention expressed in language by the word "man" (which is called a "name of first intention"); but when I think of men as a unitary class of individuals, what I have in mind is a second intention expressed in language by the word "*species*" (a name of second intention).[7] It follows that first and second intentions are gained through successive and embedded abstractions out of the same individual objects. This having been said, Burley describes the objects of logic as follows:

> I say that logic is about things of second intention insofar as they are second intentions, because in logic, one does not consider things or words but in relation to second intentions. . . . Similarly <in logic> one does not consider words unless they signify things insofar as second intentions are in them.[8]

This passage presents (at least) two difficulties: (1) Burley says at the same time that logic is about things (of second intentions) and that it is about

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[6] For the sake of brevity, I use the term "man" in the sense of the Latin "*homo*", that is, meaning not male but human being.

[7] Burley, relying on Boethius's authority (*In Categorias Aristotelis*, PL 64:159B–C, but see also Porphyry, *Isagoge* 2, 10–20), distinguishes between names of first and second impositions and considers names of first and second intentions as subclasses of names of first imposition. See Burley, *In Porph.*, *prologus*, fol. a2va–b: "Nomina rerum, secundum Boethium, sunt nomina prime impositionis, et sunt vocum nomina <nomina> secunde impositionis. Nomen prime impositionis dividitur in nomen prime intentionis et nomen secunde intentionis. Nomen prime intentionis est commune rebus, nomen secunde intentionis est commune conceptibus." On that matter, see Chrsitian Kundsen, "Intentions and Impositions," in *The Cambridge History of Later Mediaeval Philosophy*, ed. Norman Kretzmann et al. (Cambridge: 1982), 479–95, at 484–85.

[8] Burley, *In Porph.*, *prologus*, fol. a2va: "Dico ergo quod logica est de rebus secunde intentionis ut sunt secunde intentiones, quia in logica non determinatur de rebus nec de vocibus nisi per habitudinem ad intentiones secundas. . . . Similiter, non determinatur de vocibus in logica nisi inquantum significant res ut eis insunt intentiones secunde." See also *Expositio super librum Praedicamentorum Aristotelis* (hereafter, *In Cat.*) *proemium*, fol. c3vb: "Dico ergo quod liber *Predicamentorum* est de rebus secundum quod eis insunt intentiones secunde, scilicet intentio generis generalissimi, et generis subalterni, et intentio speciei et sic de aliis."

concepts (logic is about intentions and intentions are concepts)—so what are the objects of logic: things or concepts? (2) Second intentions are said to be in things—but how can concepts be in things? That same passage contains an indication towards a solution: that a second intention $I_2$ is in a thing $T$ means that $I_2$ is related to $T$. But since every intention is a concept (see $C_1$ and $C_2$ above), it means that $I_2$ is the concept of something in $T$: what is in $T$ is not the concept $I_2$ itself, but that of which $I_2$ is a concept—and that is a metaphysical constituent of $T$. Burley understands the Avicennian saying according to which logic is about second intentions joined to first intentions in the following way: the objects of logic are mental objects founded in transcendent, extramental metaphysical constituents of things. For the logician, that which is named by the word "*species*" is the (mental) object founded in that metaphysical constituent present in every human individual, and in virtue of which each of those individuals belongs to the human species.

### 1.2. *The Subject Matter and Utility of Logic*

Second intentions (joined to first intentions) are the adequate subject of logic (*subiectum adaequationis*). But logic also has a principal subject (*subiectum principalitatis*), which is the demonstrative syllogism—the syllogism that, contrary to the topical one, leads not to mere opinion, but to genuine knowledge (*syllogismus faciens scire*).[9] Concerning the utility of logic, Burley describes logic as a necessary condition for the scientific practice of any discipline: without logic there would be no science proper and every theorem would be a mere object of belief (*opinio*) instead of knowledge. The contribution of logic to the particular sciences is the technical distinction of the true from the false.[10] To the obvious objection that if logic is itself a science then it presupposes itself, Burley answers that logic, like every other science, can be virtually or consciously possessed (*virtualiter*/*artificialiter*): historically, logic was first possessed *virtualiter*

[9] Besides the general prologue of the last commentary *Super Artem Veterem*, see also Walter Burley, *Quaestiones super librum Posteriorum*, 2.36, ed. Mary Catherine Sommers (Toronto: 2000), 58–59. In his conception of the subject matter of logic, Burley follows the steps of Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones in librum Proprhyrii Isagoge et Quaestiones super Praedicamenta Aristotelis* 3.16, ed. Robert Andrews et al. (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: 1999), 15. On that matter, see also Giorgio Pini, *Categories and Logic in Duns Scotus*: *an Interpretation of Aristotle's Categories in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Leiden: 2002), 34–36.

[10] See Burley, *In Porph., prologus*, fol. a2vb: "Utilitas logice est facultas seu potestas discernendi artificialiter verum a falso in singulis scientiis."

by those innocent "logicians" who were producing syllogisms without any knowledge of what they were doing. Thus the possession *arfiticialiter* of every science other than logic presupposes the possession *artificialiter* of logic, but logic possessed *artificialiter* only presupposes itself possessed *virtualiter*.

### 1.3. *Burley as Conservative Innovator*

In the history of logic, Burley can be seen as a paradoxical figure combining a conservative tendency with a strong capacity for innovation. He gives the *moderni* of his time a dressing down for not having understood that universals are extramental things, but also that propositions are composed out of extramental things.[11] In his argumentation, he often appeals to the ancient wise men (*antiqui sapientes*) as authorities against his contemporaries.[12]

Burley's archaizing taste for realism contrasts with his original insights in the field of formal logic. Thus in his *De suppositionibus*, written in 1302—a tract which is the first significant logical textbook written in England after Roger Bacon's *Summulae logicales* (around 1250)—Burley criticizes the traditional definition of supposition as the "substantive designation of a thing" (*substantiva rei designatio*) and proposes a new definition of supposition as the "relation of an extreme <i.e. subject or predicate> to another within a proposition".[13] Furthermore, he is the author of (one

[11] See Burley, *In Cat.*, cap. *de subiecto et predicato*, fol. c6ra: "Item, sciendum est quod ex divisione hac apparent duo contraria dictis modernorum. Primum est quod universalia de genere substantie sunt extra animam. . . . Secundum contrarium modernis est quod propositio componitur ex rebus extra animam." For the interpretation of that claim, see below, section 3.2, esp. note 117.

[12] See Burley, *In Cat.*, cap. *de substantia*, fol. d1va: "Primo est sciendum secundum doctrinam antiquorum sapientium quod ad rem predicamentalem requiruntur duo, scilicet res et modus essendi superadditus illi rei." For Burley, besides Aristotle and Boethius, the most important of the *antiqui* are Avicenna, Averroes, Robert Grosseteste, and Albert the Great. On that point, see Agustin Uña Juarez, *La filosofia del siglo XIV. Contexto cultural de Walter Burley* (Madrid: 1978), 276–354.

[13] Burley, *De suppositionibus*, ed. Stephen F. Brown, "Walter Burley's Treatise *De suppositionibus* and its Influence on William of Ockham," *Franciscan Studies* 32 (1972), 15–64, § 2.01, 34: "Suppositio est proprietas extremi secundum quod unum extremum ordinatur ad aliud in propositione." Burley's definition bears affinities with two definitions found in the previous logical tradition without being identical with any of them: the one given by Lambert of Lagny in his *Logica* written between 1250 and 1265 (supposition, in a broader sense, is a property of substantive and adjective terms) and the one given by Roger Bacon in his *Summulae dialectices* (there is no supposition outside of a proposition). See Lambert of Lagny (Lambert of Auxerre), *Logica (Summa Lamberti)* VII, ed. Franco Alessio (Firenze:

of the) first tracts explicitly dedicated to the study of the formal relations between the antecedent and consequent of logical inferences (*De consequentiis*, 1302),[14] a topic that would become crucial for later 14th-century logicians such as Ockham or Buridan. Furthermore, this treatise is significant for Burley's very conception of logic. As Philotheus Boehner underlined in his 1952 book on medieval logic,[15] Burley's masterpiece, the *De puritate artis logicae* (the *Tractatus brevior* was achieved before 1323, the *Tractatus longior* was composed between 1323 and 1328) shows that the English logician construes a systematic exposition of logic based on the rules governing relations between propositions rather than on terms and their properties, a theoretical shift amounting to the passage from a logic of terms to propositional logic.[16] However, later logicians did not take up this idea so that Burley's *De puritate* appears to be a hapax in the history of medieval logic—compare, for example, the structure of Ockham's *Summa logicae* with that of Burley's *De puritate*:

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1971), 206; Alain de Libera, "Les *Summulae dialectices* de Roger Bacon. I. *De termino*. II. *De enuntiatione*," *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age* 53 (1986), 139–289, § 414–18, 265–66.

[14] See Burley, *De consequentiis*, ed. Niels Jorgen Green-Pedersen, "Walter Burley's *De consequentiis*. An Edition," *Franciscan Studies* 40 (1980), 102–66. For the notion and history of the medieval theory of consequences, see Ivan Boh, "Consequences," in *The Cambridge History of Later Mediaeval Philosophy*, 300–14; Eleonore Stump, "Topics: Their Development and Absorption in Consequences," in *The Cambridge History of Later Mediaeval Philosophy*, 273–99; Klaus Jacobi, "General Introduction," as well as the introduction to the section on consequences, in *Argumentationstheorien: scholastische Forschungen zu den logischen und semantischen Regeln korrekten Folgerns*, ed. Klaus Jacobi (Leiden: 1993), xiii–xxii and 101–11; Peter King, "Consequence as Inference. Mediaeval Proof Theory 1300–1350," in *Mediaeval Formal Logic*, ed. Mikko Yrjönsuuri (Dordrecht: 2001), 117–45; Catarina Dutilh Novaes, *Formalizations après la lettre. Studies in Mediaeval Logic and Semantics* (Amsterdam: 2005), 85–89; Wilfrid Hodges, "Detecting the Logical Content: Burley's *Purity of Logic*," in *We Will Show Them! Essays in Honour of Dov Gabbay on his 60th Birthday*, ed. Sergei Artemov et al. (London: 2005), 69–116.

[15] Philotheus Boehner, *Mediaeval Logic. An Outline of its Development from 1250 to c. 1400* (Manchester: 1952), 84–89. See also Jan Pinborg, *Logik und Semantik im Mittelalter. Ein Überblick* (Stuttgart-Bad Canstatt: 1972), 169; Ivan Boh, "Consequences," 311; Joël Biard, *Logique et théorie du signe* (Paris: 1989), 139; Alain de Libera, *La philosophie mediévale* (Paris: 1989), 47.

[16] This is particularly true of the *Tractatus brevior* which is probably nothing but a first and unachieved redaction of the work. However, in spite of the fact that the overall structure of the *Tractatus longior* bears some affinities with that of Ockham's *Summa*, a closer examination of the structure of the *Tractatus longior* reveals that the notion of consequence plays here, as in the *Tractatus brevior*, a central role—thus the very first chapter of 2.2. is dedicated to the general rules of consequences.

Structure of Burley's *De puritate*

1. Tractatus brevior (before 1323)
   - 1.1. De regulis generalibus
     - 1.1.1. De regulis generalibus consequentiarum
     - 1.1.2. Tractatus syncategorematum
2. Tractatus longior (between 1323 and 1328)
   - 2.1. De proprietatibus terminorum
     - 2.1.1. De suppositione
     - 2.1.2. De appellatione
     - 2.1.3. De copulatione
   - 2.2. De propositionibus et syllogismis hypoteticis
     - 2.2.1. De hypotheticis conditionalibus
     - 2.2.2. De modo arguendi syllogistice in istis
     - 2.2.3. De aliis propositionibus hypotheticis

Structure of Ockham's *Summa logicae* (*c.* 1323)

1. De terminis
   - 1.1. De significatione terminorum
     Including sections on names, predicables, and categories.
   - 1.2. De suppositione terminorum
2. De propositionibus
   Including sections on propositional truth, modal propositions, and the conversion of propositions.
3. De Syllogismis
   - 3.1. De syllogismo simpliciter
   - 3.2. De syllogismo demonstrativo
   - 3.3. De consequentiis
   - 3.4. De fallaciis

Figure 3.1: Comparison of the Structure of Burley's "De puritate" and Ockham's "Summa"

## 2. *The Semantics of Terms*

Burley distinguishes four main semantic relations or "properties" pertaining to terms: signification (*significatio*), supposition (*suppositio*), appellation (*appellatio*), and copulation (*copulatio*). We will consider their respective natures and differences (sections 2.1 and 2.2), before turning to a closer examination of the most sophisticated among those four properties of terms, namely supposition (section 2.3). We shall start with signification and its institution by imposition, since the relation of signification is presupposed by every other semantic relation.[17]

### 2.1. *Signification and Imposition*

It has often been noticed that the works of Burley do not contain any explicit theory of signification and that consequently the elements of such a theory have to be gathered from his discussion of simple supposition in the *De puritate*.[18] I would like to shade that claim by pointing to other

[17] For a documented survey of medieval semantics in general and in particular of the theory of supposition, its origins, and developments, see Alain de Libera and Irène Rosier Catach, "La pensée linguistique mediévale," in *Histoire des Idées Linguistiques*, vol. 2: *Le Développement de la Grammaire Occidentale*, ed. Sylvain Auroux (Liège: 1992), 115–86.

[18] See, for example, Peter Kunze, in Walter Burley, *Von der Reinheit der Kunst der Logik. Erster Traktat. Von den Eigenschaften der Termini*, ed. and trans. Peter Kunze (Hamburg: 1988), 183, n. 1; Walter Burley, *On the Purity of the Art of Logic. The Shorter and the Longer Treatises*, trans. Paul Vincent Spade (New Haven: 2000), 79, n. 1; Spade, "Walter Burley

elements pertaining to a theory of signification present in the earlier logical works of Burley—mainly his questions and commentaries on the *De interpretatione*[19] and his *Quaestiones super Sophisticos Elenchos*.[20]

Let us first look at the discussion of the simple supposition in the *De puritate*. There, Burley's point is that a name like "*homo*" signifies a species and not the individuals contained under that species. This allows him to claim that a term taken in simple supposition—for example "*homo*" in "*homo est species*"—stands for what it signifies, and thus is taken significatively (*pro significato*).[21] Here, Burley is defending his position against Ockham who thinks that a term in simple supposition is not taken significatively. Ockham's reason is that a term in simple supposition stands for a concept or intention of the soul (*intentio animae*), and that "*homo*" does not signify a species, but its individuals.[22] In his argumentation against Ockham, Burley shows that "*homo*" cannot signify singular things, and therefore cannot be taken significatively when standing in personal supposition. Here is the argument: a name signifies what it was imposed to

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on the Simple Supposition of Singular Terms," *Topoi* 16 (1997), 7–13, 8; Laurent Cesalli, *Le réalisme propositionnel: sémantique et ontologie des propositions chez Jean Duns Scot, Gauthier Burley, Richard Brinkley et Jean Wyclif* (Paris: 2007), 231. For the discussion of simple supposition by Burley, see Walter Burley, *De puritate artis logicae Tractatus longior. With a Revised Edition of the Tractatus brevior*, ed. Philotheus Boehner (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: 1955), *Tractatus longior, prologus*, 6–19.

[19] Burley's works on Aristotle's *De interpretatione* are the following: *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*, ed. Stephen F. Brown, "Walter Burley's *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*," *Franciscan Studies* 34 (1974), 200–95 (written in 1301); *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, ed. Stephen F. Brown, "Walter Burley's Middle Commentary on Aristotle's *Perihermeneias*," *Franciscan Studies* 33 (1973), 45–134 (written before 1307); and *Expositio super librum Perihermeneias Aristotelis* (hereafter, *In Perih.*), in *Expositio super Artem Veterm Porphyrii et Aristotelis*, fols. k3ra–03vb (written in 1337)—see above, Chapter One, 29–33 and 43–44, and the list of surviving authentic works.

[20] On the *Sophistical Refutations*, Sten Ebbesen and Mischa von Perger edited the following tracts (written between 1300 and 1307): *Quaestiones libri Elenchorum*, ed. Mischa von Perger, "Walter Burley's *Quaestiones libri Elenchorum* 1–3 and 13–18," *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen-Age Grec et Latin* 76 (2005), 159–237; *Quaestiones super Sophisticos Elenchos*, ed. Sten Ebbesen, "*Quaestiones super Sophisticos Elenchos* 4–12. A Revised Edition," *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen-Age Grec et Latin* 76 (2005), 239–82.

[21] Walter Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 7. This, however, does not mean that, according to Burley, a term taken in personal supposition has nothing to do with its signification; it only means that if a term stands for what it signifies, then it is in simple supposition. Since supposition is dependent upon signification and a term in personal supposition stands for its *supposita*, it is obvious that there is a link between personal supposition and the significative use of a word—that is: even if taken in personal supposition, a term does not stand for what it signifies. See below, section 2.3.7 and 2.3.7.1.

[22] William of Ockham, *Summa logicae* I, cap. 64, in *Opera Philosophica*, vol. 1, ed. Philotheus Boehner, Gedeon Gál, and Stephen F. Brown (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: 1974), 195–97.

and can only be imposed to a thing which is known;[23] but the one who imposed the name "*homo*" did not know you, nor me; therefore, "*homo*" does not signify you or me (although we are both human beings and, as such, *supposita* of the term "*homo*"); consequently, a term in personal supposition—that is, standing for singular things—cannot be taken significatively.[24] This passage does not tell much about the relation of signification itself. Rather, it informs the reader about what kind of entities a common name was imposed to—namely common, universal entities.

Burley's earlier logical works are of greater help to understand the nature of signification and its relation to imposition. We even find a quasi-definition of "*significare*", for example in Question 4 on the *Sophistical Refutations*: "to signify something is nothing else than to represent that thing under its proper *ratio*".[25] Thus signification is an epistemic relation established between a vocal sound and an essential feature of a thing: the term "*homo*" represents—and thus signifies—what all human beings have in common; but it was not imposed to any singular human being. Now, if the argument against the imposition of a vocal sound to singular things is accepted, then it should also concern the other term of the imposition relation, namely the vocal sound itself. But if the word "*homo*" I am pronouncing now was not the vocal sound that was originally imposed to the universal human nature, what is it exactly that was imposed then? Burley's answer states that what is imposed is not a *vox*-token, but a *vox*-type:

> Since one and the same vocal sound cannot be pronounced twice, if the pronounced sound were a part of the name, it would seem that the same name could not be pronounced twice. To that, one can answer that this pronounced sound which is a part of the name is not a vocal sound numerically one, but something one and common to that pronounced sound and to whichever similar sound. For the one who imposes a vocal sound in order to signify <something> does not impose that very singular sound he is pronouncing in order to signify <something>. Therefore I say that "Ioannes", which is your name, has as a part something one and common to whichever sound "Ioannes" I am now pronouncing and to whichever other of those sounds I can pronounce. Consequently, that common <element> is the

[23] See Burley, *Quaestiones super Perihermeneias*, § 1.7, 212: "Nomen non imponitur nisi cognito ab intellectu"; as well as Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.16, 55–56.

[24] Burley, *De puritate*: *Tractatus longior*, 8.

[25] See Burley, *Quaestiones super Sophisticos Elenchos* 4, 245: "Significare aliquid nihil aliud est quam illud sub propria ratione representare"; see also ibid., 12, 280.

> material <element> in the significate of the name and the relation established in order to signify is formal.[26]

Just as common names were not imposed to singular things, singular vocal sounds were not the things which were imposed. Thus although we constantly use *voces*-tokens to speak about *res*-tokens, the original act of imposition in virtue of which words acquire their signification established a relation between types (of *voces* and *res*). According to Burley, every name has an "imposable" material, universal part—its phonological species, a *vox*-type—and a formal, conventional part—the relation of signification resulting from the act of imposition.[27] The nonsingular nature of the elements required for the process of imposition is linked to an epistemic presupposition of imposition. Indeed, imposition presupposes the knowledge of at least two things: the sound to be imposed and the thing to be named. Since, however, the extramental singular things themselves are not what is known, they cannot be the terms of the imposition-relation.[28] Summing up, one can state that linguistic signification is founded in an original, free act of imposition in virtue of which something becomes a sign of another thing. But while imposition involves only types (of words and things), signification usually takes place between sign-tokens (singular words, e.g. "*homo*") and thing-types (e.g. the human nature).

Let us now turn to the traditional and problematic question of what exactly words signify.[29] This is the first topic addressed in one of the earliest of Burley's works, the *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias* of 1301.

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[26] Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.05–1.07, 46–47: "Cum eadem vox non possit bis proferri, si vox prolata esset pars nominis, videtur quod idem nomen non possit bis proferri . . . Ad istud potest dici . . . quod ista vox prolata quae est pars nominis non est aliqua vox una numero, sed est unum commune ad istam vocem prolatam et ad quamlibet vocem consimilem. . . Nam ille qui imponit vocem ad significandum non imponit illam vocem singularem quam profert ad significandum. . . . Dico igitur . . . quod 'Ioannes' quod est nomen tuum componitur ex uno communi ad quamlibet talem vocem 'Ioannes' quam modo profero et alias <quas> possum proferre. Unde tale commune est materiale in significato nominis et respectus ad significandum est formale."

[27] The characterization of signification as the formal element of the name has to be related to the notion of formal supposition—a term is in formal supposition when it is taken significatively (see below, section 2.3.5).

[28] See Burley, *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.115, 207: "Nomen non imponitur nisi ei quod intelligitur. Sed res extra non intelligitur, quoniam ex intellectu et intelligibili verius fit unum quam ex materia et forma . . . Sed ex intellectu et re extra animam non fit unum. Igitur res extra animam non intelligitur, et per consequens sibi non imponitur nomen."

[29] For a general introduction to that question in the time of the young Burley and immediately before, see Giorgio Pini, "Species, Concept and Thing: Theories of Signification in the Second Half of the Thirteenth Century," *Mediaeval Philosophy and Theology* 8

Question 1 reads: "whether a vocal sound primarily signifies a thing or a *passio animae*".[30] Two main options are exposed and discussed: the first states that a vocal sound does not primarily signify a thing, a position clearly rejected by Burley;[31] the second claims that a vocal sound primarily signifies a *passio animae*, a position which is rejected as such by Burley, although his own position bears some affinities with it, provided that the notion of *passio animae* is rightly understood:[32]

> One has to say that a *passio*, as for our present concern, can be understood in three ways: for in one way, a concept is a movement of the sensitive appetite. In another way, the apprehension itself made from an extra-mental thing is called a *passio*. And Aristotle did not understand a *passio* in any of these ways when he said that vocal sounds are marks of *passiones animae*. In a third way, a *passio* is understood for the thing itself insofar as it is suited to move the intellect and when understood in that way, vocal sounds do signify *passiones*, because to signify a *passio* in this way is nothing else than to signify a thing insofar as it is proportionate to the intellect. And in that way, any vocal sound signifies a *passio*. The reason for that is the following: a name is not imposed, except to what is cognized by the intellect; but to be cognized by the intellect is nothing, if that <which is cognized> is not proportionate to the intellect; therefore a name is not imposed to something unless that thing is proportionate to the intellect. However, any vocal sound does not primarily signify something existing in the intellect, for the acts of cognizing and signifying are alike. But three things have to be considered in the act of cognizing, that is: a thing cognized and the cognizing intellect itself and a *species* by means of which a thing is cognized so that this *species* is not that which is primarily cognized, but a thing is primarily cognized by means of a *species*. Likewise, three things are involved in the act of signifying: a signifying vocal sound, a signified thing and a species by means of which a thing is signified. And just as a *species* is not what is primarily

(1999), 21–52, as well as Pini, "Signification of Names in Duns Scotus and Some of His Contemporaries," *Vivarium* 39.1 (2001), 20–51.

[30] See Burley, *Quaestiones super librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.01, 202: "Quaeritur utrum vox primo significet rem vel passionem." Since there is no satisfactory English expression to render what Burley has in mind when speaking of *passiones animae*, I leave the expression (*passio animae* or *passio*) in Latin. For its signification, see the next quotation, 97–98.

[31] See Burley, *Quaestiones super librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.12, 203 and 1.82, 213. Burley dismisses the objection according to which the term "*homo*" cannot signify a thing (because every thing is numerically one and "*homo*" does not signify things which are numerically one such as Socrates or Plato) by stressing that there are things which are not numerically but specifically one (such as the universal signified by "*homo*").

[32] Burley, *Quaestiones super librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.3–1.65, 208–11.

> cognized, in the same way, a *species* is not what is primarily signified, but <what is primarily signified is> a thing by means of a *species*.[33]

In this text, the notions of *passio animae* and *species* play a central role. The two notions are certainly related, but do not seem to be equivalent: according to that passage, a *passio animae* is a thing insofar as it is proportionate to the intellect, while a *species* is that through which a thing is cognized. In later texts, however, Burley uses the expressions "*species*" and "*passio animae*" interchangeably in the sense of "mental similitude of a thing".[34] Thus, according to Burley, a vocal sound signifies a thing as the adequate object of an act of representation, a *res proportionata intellectui*. In one sense, therefore, signifying always involves an immediate mental instance—the *passio animae* or *species* by means of which a thing is cognized and thus signified—and in that precise sense (but in that sense only), every spoken word signifies a concept. But in another sense, the concept is only signified as what primarily motivates the act of imposition, and not as that to which the name was imposed.[35] The mediating

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[33] See Burley, *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.7, 211–12: "Dicendum… quod passio quantum ad propositum tripliciter potest sumi: Nam passio uno modo est motus appetitus sensitivi. Alio modo passio dicitur ipsa apprehensio facta in intellectu a re extra. Et neutro istorum modorum intellexit Philosophus passionem cum dixit quod voces sunt notae passionum animae. Tertio modo sumitur passio pro re ipsa ut nata est movere intellectum, et sic sumendo passionem voces significant passiones, quia nihil aliud est significare passionem isto modo quam significare rem ut est proportionata intellectui. Et isto modo quaelibet vox significat passionem. Cuius ratio est: Nomen non imponitur nisi cognito ab intellectu; sed nihil est cognosci ab intellectu nisi secundum quod est proportionatum intellectui; et ideo nomen non imponitur alicui nisi secundum quod illud est proportionatum intellectui. Non tamen significat vox quaelibet primo aliquid existens in intellectu, nam sicut est in actu intelligendi sic est in actu significandi. Sed in actu intelligendi est considerare tria, scilicet rem intellectam et ipsum intellectum intelligentem, et speciem mediante qua res intelligitur, sic quod illa species non est illud quod primo intelligitur sed res primo intelligitur mediante specie. Sic in actu significandi est reperire tria: vocem significantem, rem significatam et speciem rei mediante qua re significatur. Et sicut species non est illud quod primo intelligitur sic species non est illud quod primo significatur sed res medeiante species." See also Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.16, 55–56.

[34] For instance, Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.16, 55–56, as well as Burley, *Expositio super librum Perihermeneias Aristotelis* (hereafter, *In Perih.*) cap. 1, in *Expositio super Artem Veterm Porphyrii et Aristotelis*, fol. k3rb–va. The second sense of "*passio animae*" mentioned by Burley in the passage quoted above (*Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.7, 211–12) seems to imply that he acknowledges a distinction between a mental act of representing (*ipsa apprehensio rei*) and its content (*passio animae*).

[35] See Burley, *In Perih.*, cap. 1, fol. k3va: "Si vero <vox> primo significat aliquid in anima, non est necesse quod significet illud tamquam illud cui imponitur primo, sed tamquam illud quod primo movet intellectum ad imponendum nomen rei intellecte."

role of the concept in signification leads Burley to conceive of signification as a transitive relation linking the written words to the ultimately signified things.[36] As a consequence, concepts are also endowed with signification, but, contrary to written and spoken terms, they are natural and not conventional signs.[37]

### 2.2. *Appellation and Copulation*

Signification is the primary semantic property of words. It is natural in the case of "mental words" (i.e. concepts), conventional—that is, imposition-based—in the case of written or spoken words. Furthermore, secondary semantic properties of terms distinguished by Burley are supposition, appellation, and copulation. These three notions provide the main structural ratio of the first section (*De proprietatibus terminorum*) in the *Tractatus longior* of his *De puritate artis logicae*:

> Assuming the significates of noncomplex terms, in this tract I intend to investigate certain properties of terms, properties that are applicable to them only insofar as they are parts of propositions. I divide this tract into three parts. The first is about the supposition of terms, the second about appellation, and the third about copulation. Supposition belongs to the subject, appellation to the predicate. Copulation belongs to the verb that couples the predicate with the subject.[38]

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[36] See Burley, *In Perih.*, cap. 1, fol. k3rb–va: "Dicit igitur Philosophus quod nomina et verba que sunt in voce, hoc est in prolatione, sunt note passionum anime, hoc est conceptuum anime qui sunt similitudines rerum. Et ea que scribuntur eorum que sunt in voce, hoc est nomina et verba scripta, significant nomina et verba prolata. Talem igitur ordinem signorum assignat hic Aristoteles, scilicet quod passiones animae, hoc est similitudines rerum existentium in anima, significant res extra, et nomina et verba prolata significant passiones anime." Concerning the *ordo significationis* for Burley's semantics of propositions, see Stephan Meier-Oeser, "Burley's *propositio in re* and the Systematisation of the *ordo significationis*," in *Philosophical Debates at the University of Paris in the First Quarter of the Fourteenth Century*, S.F. Brown, Th. Dewender, and Th. Kobush eds., (Leiden: 2009), 483–505.

[37] See for example Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.11, 53: "Nomina et verba scripta et prolata significant ad placitum. Sed passiones animae significant naturaliter."

[38] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 1: "Suppositis significatis terminorum incomplexorum in hoc tractatu intendo prescrutari de quibusdam proprietatibus terminorum, quae solum eis competunt secundum quod sunt partes propositionis. Et hunc tractatum divido in tres partes. Prima est de suppositione terminorum, secunda de appellatione et tertia de copulatione. Suppositio debetur subiecto, appellatio praedicato, et copulatio debetur verbo copulanti praedicatum cum subiecto." (Spade's translation, 79). For the general structure of the *De puritate*, see above, section 1.3, Figure 3.1, 93.

Supposition, appellation, and copulation are functionally differentiated properties of *terms* in the strictest sense, that is, properties of words within a proposition.[39] Since Burley's supposition theory will be considered in detail in the next section (2.3), we focus here on appellation and copulation alone.

Appellation is defined as "the property of a common term that is predicable of its inferiors".[40] Appellation differs from signification, says Burley, because while a univocal common term appellates its inferiors, it does not signify them. Therefore, "appellating some things is the same as being common to them. Because of this, a common name is said to be an appellative name."[41] Thus, "*albus*" in "*homo est albus*" stands in a relation of appellation to every white thing because it univocally signifies the quality of being white common to every white thing. But it does not signify any white thing: no white man is signified by "*albus*" in "*homo est albus*" although "*albus*" in that proposition appellates every white man.[42]

Copulation, on the other hand, is defined as "the union or putting together of the predicate with the subject".[43] As its name reveals, copulation pertains to the copula (i.e. the verb "*est*"). Not every use of "*est*", however, is copulative. When taken *de secundo adiacente*—as in "*homo est*"—"*est*" is a categorematic term, that is, a term semantically autonomous and signifying per se the actual existence of something. When, by contrast, "*est*" is taken *de tertio adiacente*—as in "*homo est albus*"—it is a

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[39] Note that in his earlier *De suppositionibus*, Burley, as we have seen above (section 1.3), defends another position: he attributes supposition to both extremes of the proposition and does not mention copulation at all. Appellation is mentioned in the prologue (§ 1.1–1.2, 31–33), but does not play any technical role in the treatise. In § 6.1–6.3, 60, Burley formulates the traditional rule of appellation (a common term supposing in relation to a nonampliative verb in the present stands for actually existing things only) without using the term "*appellatio*" itself.

[40] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 47: "Proprietas termini communis praedicabilis de suis inferioribus." (Spade's translation, 131).

[41] See Burley, ibid.: "Unde appellare aliqua est idem quod esse commune ad illa et propter hoc nomen commune dicitur esse nomen appellativum."

[42] This notion of appellation differs from the one found for example in terminist logicians of the 13th century such as Lambert of Lagny (Lambert of Auxerre), according to whom to appellate is to stand for actually existing things only, see Alain de Libera, "Le traité *De appellatione* de Lambert de Lagny (Lambert d'Auxerre)," *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age* 58 (1982), 227–85, 255–56. On that topic, see also Frédéric Goubier, "Influences prédicatives et conséquences référentielles. Un aspect de l'approche terministe de la première moitié du XIII^e siècle," *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen Age Grec et Latin* 71 (2000), 37–70.

[43] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 54: "<Appellatio> est unio seu compositio praedicati cum subiecto" (Spade's translation, 139).

syncategorematic term, that is, a term which only possesses a signification in conjunction with other terms.[44] In that case, "*est*" is a copula and signifies the mere composition of the subject with the predicate.

The identification of secondary semantic properties of terms such as supposition, appellation, and copulation, which are distinct from (but all presuppose) signification is a consequence, on the theoretical level, of the fact that we do not always use words to speak about what they signify. Thus the proposition *p*: "*iste homo currit*" (this man runs) says nothing about the common human nature (which is definitely not running), despite the fact that this common nature is signified by the subject term of *p*. And indeed, the task of the whole theory of supposition could be somewhat naively described as providing rules allowing users of a given language to know exactly about what they are talking.

### 2.3. *Burley's Supposition Theory*

Burley wrote two works on supposition: the *De suppositionibus* (1302) and the first section of the second redaction of the *De puritate artis logicae*, the so-called *Tractatus longior* (1323–28). In what follows, we focus on the later work, only mentioning some doctrinal differences with the earlier tract. There is, however, an important difference regarding the intellectual context in which the two treatises were written: whereas the *De suppositionibus* was composed before Ockham began his theological and philosophical career, the *Tractatus longior* contains criticisms and discussions of Ockham's positions. In fact, in his *Summa logicae* (ca. 1323) Ockham was influenced by Burley's *De suppositionibus*, and in turn, Burley reacted to the *Summa* in his *Tractatus longior*.[45]

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[44] For the notion of syncategoreme as expressed by Burley, see *Tractatus longior*, 54: "Nunc autem omnis dictio, quae per se non constituit intellectum est syncategorema" ("*constituere intellectum*" is a synonym of "*significare*"). On that topic, see the thematic issue of the journal *Histoire, épistémologie, langage* 25.2 (2003).

[45] For the relation between the *De suppositionibus* and the *Tractatus longior* as well as for the reciprocal influences between Burley and Ockham, see the introduction of Stephen F. Brown to his edition of the *De suppositionibus* (Burley, 1972) as well as the contribution of Catarina Dutilh Novaes to the present volume (above, 49–84). For a general and detailed presentation of Burley's theory of supposition, see Peter Kunze, *Satzwahrheit und sprachliche Verweisung. Walter Burleighs Lehre von der "suppositio termini" in Auseinandersetzung mit der mittelalterlichen Tradition un der Logik William's of Ockham* (Freiburg im Breisgau: 1980). The introduction and the notes accompanying the German translation of the first section of Burley's *Tractatus longior* offer much useful information and many insights concerning Burley's theory and its relation to the tradition of medieval logic, see Burley, *Von der Reinheit der Kunst der Logik*, trans. Peter Kunze (Hamburg: 1988).

2.3.1. *The Definitions of Supposition*

Burley distinguishes three embedded notions of supposition, two of which are contextual, and the third not: (1) in a broad sense, supposition is the semantic property a term has relative to another term in a proposition; (2) in a strict sense, supposition is the semantic property of a subject term relative to a predicate term; (3) in a general sense, supposition is the acceptation of a word for something, that is, for a thing, a vocal sound, or a concept.[46] Thus with sense (3), we have a purely semantic acceptation of supposition, while the senses (1) and (2) are syntactic acceptations of supposition. Further, sense (2) is a restriction of sense (1). Schematically:

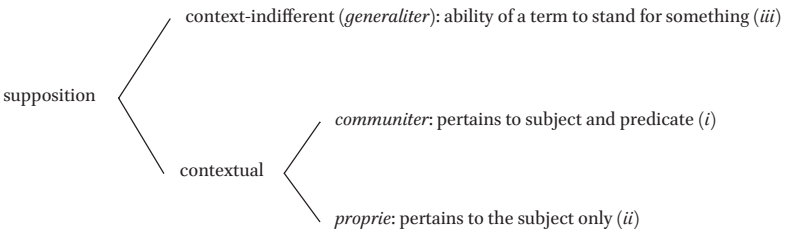

supposition
context-indifferent (*generaliter*): ability of a term to stand for something (*iii*)
contextual
*communiter*: pertains to subject and predicate (*i*)
*proprie*: pertains to the subject only (*ii*)

Figure 3.2: Definitions of "suppositio" in the "Tractatus longior"

Supposition in sense (3) does not play any technical role in Burley's subsequent theory. In spite of the distinction made in the general prologue between supposition and appellation as pertaining respectively to the subject and predicate terms,[47] both senses (1) and (2) of supposition do play a role in Burley's subsequent theory—thus Burley exemplifies the supposition *confusa tantum* with the predicate's way of supposing in the sentence "*omnis homo est animal*".[48] The reason for that change of perspective is linked with Burley's theory of truth and its underlying ontology:[49] there is a metaphysical asymmetry between that for which a subject term and a predicate term stand. This asymmetry is mirrored at the linguistic

[46] See Burley, *De puriate artis logicae. Tractatus longior*, 1–2: "Suppositio accipitur dupliciter, scilicet communiter et proprie. Suppositio communiter accepta est proprietas termini ad alium terminum in propositione comparati. . . . Suppositio proprie dicta est proprietas termini subiecti ad praedicatum comparati. . . . Suppositio generaliter dicta est acceptio termini pro aliquo, scilicet pro re vel pro voce vel pro conceptu."

[47] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 1, and above, section 2.2.

[48] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 21. Note that the definitions (2) and (3) of supposition in the *Tractatus longior* contrast with the one found in the earlier *De suppositionibus*, where supposition equally pertains to the subject or the predicate, see above, section 1.3.

[49] See below, section 3.

level by the different logical and grammatical functions of subject and predicate terms.

### 2.3.2. *The Division of Supposition*

Burley's supposition tree presents several originalities compared to previous (and subsequent) divisions of supposition.[50] Three striking features can be mentioned here: first, the fundamental distinction between proper and improper supposition (absent in Peter of Spain, Sherwood, Bacon, and Lambert of Lagny, but present in Ockham, the Pseudo-Campsall, Buridan, Richard Brinkley, and John Wyclif); second, the opposition of material and formal supposition, a feature which only appears in a few other medieval logical tracts (i.e. in Sherwood, Pseudo-Campsall, and Wyclif); third, the subdivision of simple supposition into three subspecies (present only and later in Wylcif who distinguishes between simple supposition *equa* and *inequa*, the latter being itself divided into *inequa pro specie* and *inequa pro accidente*).[51] We will now consider the Burleyian supposition tree in more detail and give examples with commentary for each type of supposition. In the *Tractatus longior*, Burley divides supposition as follows:

### 2.3.3. *Proper versus Improper Supposition*

The first embranchment opposes proper to improper supposition. A term is taken in proper supposition when it stands for something in virtue of the literal sense of the word at stake (*de virtute sermonis*); when a word stands for something in virtue of a semantic displacement (*ex transsumptione*) or of a certain usage (*ex usu loquendi*), then it is taken in improper supposition.[52] Improper supposition covers the cases of rhetoric figures. Burley mentions the three most common types, but other authors, such as

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[50] For a comparison of Burley's tree with other (mainly posterior) divisions of supposition, see Alfonso Maierù, *Terminologia logica della tarda scolastica* (Rome: 1972), 306–17; for an overview of supposition trees from Peter of Spain to John Buridan, see Paul Vincent Spade, *Thoughts, Words and Things: an Introduction to Late Mediaeval Logic and Semantic Theory*, http://www.pvspade.com/Logic/docs/thoughts.pdf, 272–75.

[51] See John Wyclif, *Tractatus de logica*, ed. Michael Henry Dziewicki, vol. 1 (London: 1893), Chapter 12, 39–40.

[52] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 2: "Suppositio propria est quando terminus supponit pro aliquo, pro quo de virtute sermonis permittitur supponere. Suppositio impropria est quando terminus supponit pro aliquo ex transsumptione vel ex usu loquendi." The sense "*de virtute sermonis*" is opposed to the other ways of taking a term as the originally given sense of a word is opposed to its intended and context dependent senses. On that topic, see William J. Courtenay, "Force of Words and Figure of Speech: the Crisis Over *virtus sermonis* in the Fourteenth Century," *Franciscan Studies* 44 (1984), 107–28.

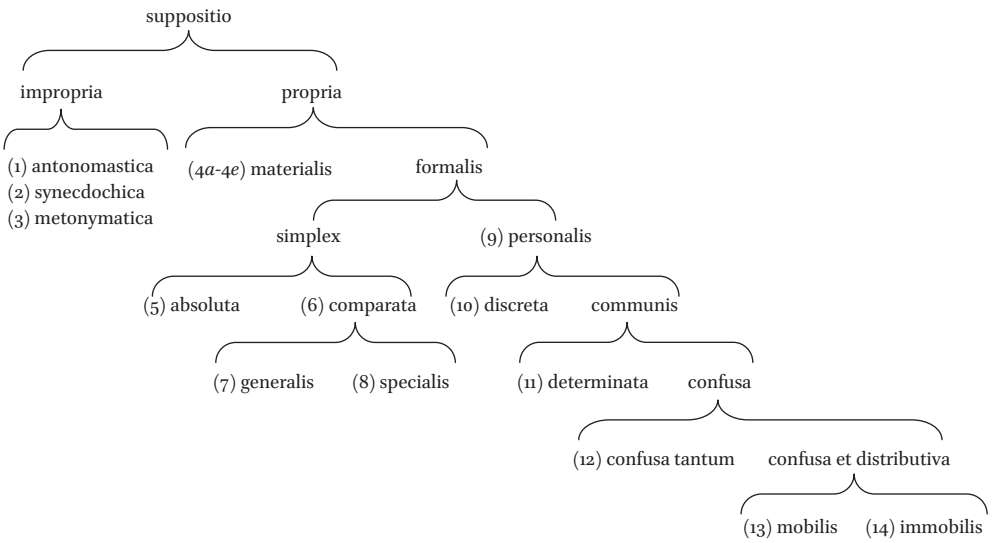



Figure 3.3: *Burley's Supposition Tree*

Richard Brinkley, count up to six different types of improper supposition.[53] Standard examples of improper supposition are the following (the underlined word is taken in the supposition to be exemplified):

(1) *Apostolus dicit hoc* (the Apostle says this).
(2) *prora est in mari* (the prow is in the sea).
(3) *bibe cyphum!* (drink a glass!).[54]

In none of these sentences are the underlined words meant to be taken according to their standard meaning: in (1) "*Apostolus*" stands for Paul, in (2) "*prora*" for the ship, and in (3) "*cyphum*" for a certain liquid. What

[53] Brinkley speaks then of *suppositio figurativa* and distinguishes the following cases: *solecismus*, *antyfrasis*, *synecdoche*, *antonomasia*, *ex auctoritate*, *ad intentionem auctoris* (Richard Brinkley, *Tractatus de suppositionibus* c. 15, ed. Laurent Cesalli and Joël Lonfat—forthcoming).

[54] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 46–47: "Suppositio antonomastica est quando terminus supponit praecise pro illo cui maxime convenit nomen. Ut cum dicitur: 'Apostolus dicit hoc' . . . Suppositio synecdochica est quando pars supponit pro toto, ut: 'prora est in mari' . . . Suppositio metonymatica est quando continens supponit pro contento. Sed hoc est improprie, quia de virtute sermonis cyphus non supponit pro contento in cypho, sed solum secundum usum loquendi." The example "*Bibe cyphum!*" is given in the *De suppositionibus*, § 2.73, 54.

happens here is a transfer of sense commanded by the intention of the speaker (and thus by the use of the words).[55]

### 2.3.4. *Material Supposition*

Proper supposition is first divided into formal and material supposition. Generally speaking, material supposition is the property possessed by a vocal sound standing either for itself or for another vocal sound which does not fall under it (*vox quae non est inferior ad illam*). This last clause allows, for example, a dictum such as "*hominem esse animal*" to stand materially for the proposition of which it is the dictum, that is, "*homo est animal*".[56] Thus material supposition, as Burley conceives of it, can neither be reduced to strict autonymy (a term-token standing for itself), nor to mere mention (a term-token being used as a name for another term-token).[57] The case in which a vocal sound can be said to fall under another one—a case where there is no material supposition—occurs when the term at stake is a metalinguistic category. In the proposition "*omne nomen est vox*" (every name is a vocal sound), "*nomen*" stands for every vocal sound falling under the concept of name (that is, for every name), and is thus taken in personal supposition.[58] Altogether, Burley distinguishes five modes of material supposition and claims that every possible case of material supposition can be reduced to one of those five: (4a) a spoken term stand for itself as pronounced, or a written term stands for itself as written; (4b) a spoken term stands for itself as written or vice versa; (4c) a term stands for another which does not fall under it; (4d) a term

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[55] At least sentence (2) could be meant *de virtute sermonis*. Thus the verb "*permittitur*" which occurs in the definition of proper supposition and is negatively implied in the definition of improper supposition does not refer to possibility (it is possible for a prow to be in the sea), but to compatibility with what is meant by the speaker (by saying "*prora est in mari*", the speaker normally does not intend to describe a shipwreck).

[56] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 2: "Suppositio materialis est quando vox supponit pro se ipsa vel pro alia voce quae non est inferior ad illam. Exemplum primi: 'homo est disyllabum' . . . Exemplum secundi: 'hominem esse animal est propositio vera'; hic haec vox 'hominem esse animal' supponit pro hac voce 'homo est animal' et haec vox 'hominem esse animal' non est inferior nec superior ad hanc vocem 'homo est animal'."

[57] On the question of the medieval notion of material supposition compared to the modern one, see Claude Panaccio, "Tarski et la suppositio materialis," *Philosophiques* 31.2 (2004), 295–309; Irène Rosier Catach, "La *suppositio materialis* et l'autonymie au Moyen Age," in *Parler des mots. Le fait autonymique en discours*, ed. J. Authier-Revuz et al. (Paris: 2003), 21–55; Christoph Kann, "Materiale Supposition und die Erwähnung von Sprachzeichen," in *Neue Realitäten. Herausforderung der Philosophie*, ed. Hans Lenk et al. (Berlin: 1993), 231–38.

[58] For personal supposition, see below, section 2.3.7.

taken in one supposition supposes for itself taken in another supposition; (4e) a term taken in a certain supposition stands for itself as not being able to supposit at all.[59] Here are the examples given by Burley:

(4a) *homo profertur* (*homo* is pronounced) [spoken proposition].
(4b) *homo est vox prolata* (*homo* is a pronounced vocal sound) [written proposition].
(4c) *hominem esse animal est oratio enuntiativa* (that man is an animal is a declarative sentence).
(4d) *homo supponit personaliter in A* (*homo* supposits personally in *A*) [*A* = "*omnis homo currit*" (every man runs), in which "*homo*" is in personal supposition].
(4e) *albus* non potest supponere (*albus* cannot supposit) (strictly speaking, and granted that "*albus*" is a predicate—which it is de facto in most of the standard examples such as "*homo est albus*"—"*albus*" does not have supposition, but appellation).

Note that in his earlier *De suppositionibus*, Burley has a different and extremely concise definition of material supposition: "material supposition is when a term supposits for an utterance".[60] The reflexive clause "*pro se ipsa*" does not occur explicitly in the definition, but it is clearly implied by the examples of the (only) three types of material supposition Burley is distinguishing there: (1) a term stands only for a vocal sound ("*homo est dissyllabum*"); (2) a term stands for a vocal sound with respect to its significate ("*homo est nomen*"); (3) a term stands for a vocal sound with respect to what it connotes ("*homo est singularis numeri*").[61] Although, as we shall see, Burley acknowledges a mental language besides the written

[59] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 5: "Et sic apparet quod quinque modis potest terminus supponere materialiter. Et si alii inveniantur modi, erunt similes istis vel reductibiles ad istos: primus modus, quando terminus prolatus supponit pro seipso prolato eodem modo sumpto, vel scriptus pro seipso scripto. Secundus modus, quando terminus prolatus supponit pro seipso scripto vel econverso. Tertius modus, quando terminus vel vox supponit pro alia voce, quae non est inferior ad eam. . . . Quartus modus est, quando terminus sumptus sub una suppositione supponit pro seipso accepto sub alia suppositione. Quintus modus est, quando terminus acceptus sub una suppositione supponit pro seipso non potente supponere."

[60] See Burley, *De suppositionibus*, § 2.2, 35: "Suppositio materialis est quando terminus supponit pro voce" [English translation: Paul Vincent Spade, "Walter Burley, From the Beginning of His *Treatise of the Kinds of Supposition* (*De suppositionibus*)," *Topoi* 16 (1995), 95–102, at 96].

[61] Connotation is an indirect semantic relation: the word "*homo*" signifies the universal human nature but connotes (gives indirectly to understand) the singular number; "*homines*" would indirectly give to undersand (connote) the plural number without any change in signification.

and spoken ones,[62] he does not mention the possibility for a mental term to be taken in material supposition, a possibility that is explicitly allowed by Ockham, at least when a mental term stands for the corresponding written or spoken term.[63]

### 2.3.5. *Formal Supposition*

The distinction between material and formal supposition, as we have seen, is a feature that Burley's conception shares only with a few other medieval theories.[64] The distinction is present in the *Tractatus longior* as well as in the early tract *De suppositionibus*. In both texts, Burley's indications are extremely limited:

> Formal supposition is of two kinds. For sometimes a term supposits for its significate, sometimes for its *suppositum*, or for some singular of which it is truly predicated. And so formal supposition is divided into personal supposition and simple supposition.[65]

Negatively, formal supposition can be understood as nonmaterial supposition, that is, when a term does not supposit for itself in one of the five senses described above (see section 2.3.4), it is taken in formal supposition. This initial approach is confirmed by the fact that formal supposition includes the two other main types of supposition besides the material one: personal supposition and simple supposition. A positive description of formal supposition can be tentatively reconstructed based on the role played by the adjective "*formalis*" in Burley's conception of signification.

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[62] See below, section 3. See also Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.03, 45: "Unde quaelibet pars orationis in scripto vel in prolatione est pars orationis in mente."

[63] William of Ockham, *Summa logicae* I. 64, 197: "Sicut autem talis diversitas suppositionis potest competere termino vocali et scripto, ita etiam potest competere termino mentali, quia intentio potest supponere pro illo quod significant et pro se ipsa et pro voce et pro scripto." According to Ockham, however, when a mental term stands for itself, we do not have a case of material, but of simple supposition. See Claude Panaccio and Ernesto Perini Santos, "Guillaume d'Ockham et la *suppositio materialis*," *Vivarium* 42 (2004), 202–24; Calvin G. Normore, "Material Supposition and the Mental Language of Ockham's *Summa Logicae*," *Topoi* 16.1 (1997), 27–33.

[64] See above, section 2.3.2. Burley's most probable source on that matter is William of Sherwood, *Introductiones in logicam* V, ed. and trans. Hartmut Brands and Christoph Kann (Hamburg: 1995), 136.

[65] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 3: "Suppositio formalis est duplex, quoniam terminus quandoque supponit pro suo significato, quandoque pro suo supposito vel pro aliquo singulari, de quo ipsum vere praedicatur. Et ideo suppositio formalis dividitur in suppotisionem personalem et in suppositionem simplicem" (Spade's translation, 81). See also Burley, *De suppositionibus*, § 2.3, 35–36.

In this connection, recall that in an imposed vocal sound, Burley distinguishes a material and a formal element: the material element is the phonological type of the word at stake, while the formal element is the relation established in order for that word to signify.[66] Now, the opposition between material and formal supposition may be founded in the distinction between those two components present in every significative word: material supposition is a case of metalinguistic use—it occurs when we speak about words—and formal supposition occurs when a word is used with respect to what it is meant to signify—whenever used to speak about human beings (universally or particularly), the word "*homo*" is taken in formal supposition.[67]

2.3.6. *Simple Supposition*

According to Burley, simple supposition is, besides personal supposition, one of the two kinds of formal supposition. Describing it turns into a true test case for logical theories, for the most profound divergences between logicians often show up when the characterization of simple supposition is at stake. Roughly speaking, in the dispute between Burley and Ockham, two central questions are raised about simple supposition: first, is it a significative use of a word? Second, for what kind of things does a word taken in simple supposition stand? Here is a consensual example of a term (*homo*) taken in simple supposition—consensual, because it stays "upstream" of the two issues just mentioned: *homo est species* (man is a

[66] See above, section 1.2, and the text quoted there (Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.05–1.07, 46–47).

[67] The link between the notion of formal supposition and the formal element identified within the signification of a word might have its roots in the distinction between "*materialiter teneri*" and "*formaliter teneri*" as found, for instance, in Thomas Aquinas, *Expositio libri Peryermeneias* I.5.6, ed. René Antoine Gauthier (Rome: 1989 – *Leonina* I*1), 26: "Set dicendum est quod in tali locutione [sc. 'curro est verbum'] hoc verbum 'curro' non sumitur formaliter, secundum quod eius significatio refertur ad rem, set secundum quod materialiter significat ipsam vocem, que accipitur ut res quedam; et ideo tam uerba quam omnes orationis partes, quando ponuntur materialiter, summuntur in ui nominum." Later authors such as, for example, Hervaeus Natalis or Francesco da Prato, distinguish between a formal and a material significate of a word (the former being immediate, the latter mediate). See Fabrizio Amirini, *La logica di Francesco da Prato* (Florence: 2005), 85 (doctrinal introduction) and 522 (*Tractatus de voce univoca*, art. III): "Dicitur enim vox univoca a suo formali et inmediato significato, quando, scilicet formaliter et inmediate, significat unam naturam unius rationis . . . Dicitur autem vox univoca essentialiter vel denominative non a suo formali significato, set a significato materiali et secundario sive mediato." Examples of secondary significates are white things (*cygnum*, *nix*) for the word "white".

species).[68] Burley's answers are respectively "yes" and "an extra-mental universal", whereas Ockham's are respectively "no" and "an intention of the soul, that is: a concept".[69] However, as we shall see, Burley's second answer has to be nuanced.[70]

2.3.6.1. The Description of Simple Supposition

While there is no formal definition of simple supposition in Burley, he nevertheless gives several descriptions of the conditions under which simple supposition occurs. In what follows, we will only consider the theory as exposed in the *Tractatus longior* since it appears to be an improved version of the one found in the earlier *De suppositionibus*.[71] Thus in Burley's major logical work, simple supposition is described as follows:

> Supposition is simple when a common term supposits for its first significate or for everything contained under its first significate, or else when a singular concrete term or a singular compound term supposits for its whole significate.[72]

If Burley does not give any proper definition of simple supposition, he nevertheless formulates criteria for simple supposition. Those criteria can be seen as answers to the two following questions: (i) What kind of terms

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[68] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 7. For a study of Burley's notion and division of simple supposition, see Paul Vincent Spade, "Walter Burley on the Kinds of Simple Supposition," *Vivarium* 37.1 (1999), 41–59.

[69] For Ockham's analysis of the example "*homo est species*", see for instance William of Ockham, *Summa logicae* I.64, 196. Concerning the divergence with Burley on that question, see the contribution of Catarina Dutilh Novaes in the present volume, 74–81 as well as above, section 2.1.

[70] See Paul Vincent Spade, "Walter Burley on the Simple Supposition of Singular Terms," *Topoi* 16 (1997), 7–13, where the author shows that (1) for Burley singular terms can have simple supposition, and (2) singular things can be the *supposita* of terms taken in simple supposition.

[71] Spade, "Walter Burley on the Kinds of Simple Supposition," 57–58. This study offers a careful comparison of both formulations in the *De suppositionibus* and the *Tractatus longior*.

[72] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 7: "Suppositio simplex est quando terminus communis supponit pro suo significato primo vel pro omnibus contentis sub suo significato primo vel quando terminus singularis concretus vel terminus singularis compositus supponit pro suo significato totali" (Spade's translation, 86). See also ibid., 3: "Suppositio vero simplex est quando terminus communis vel singulare aggregatum supponit pro eo quod significat." In the *De suppositionibus*, Burley immediately divides simple supposition into absolute and compared simple supposition (§ 2.3, 35–36). The main difference between the *De suppositionibus* and the *Tractatus longior* with respect to the notion of simple supposition is that in the earlier treatise "to stand in simple supposition" is equivalent to "standing for the significate", whereas in the *Tractatus longior* Burley also considers singular things as possible *supposita* of a term standing in simple supposition.

can be in simple supposition? (ii) For what kind of things does a term in simple supposition stand? Burley's answer to the first question is very liberal: common and singular terms can be in simple supposition. More precisely, common terms like "*homo*" and complex singular terms such as "*Socrates albus*" can be in simple supposition. As for the second question, Burley answers that when a common term is in simple supposition, it stands for its first significate (that is, for an extramental universal, as in "*homo est species*") or for everything contained under it (that is, for a universal falling under a higher-order universal, as in "*substantia est substantia secunda*");[73] when, by contrast, a complex singular term is in simple supposition, it stands for its whole significate (that is, for a complex object of the type "quality + substance", as in "*Socrates albus est ens per accidens*").[74] The following passage summarizes Burley's point of view:

> If someone asks, whether supposition is always personal when a singular term supposits, it must be said that whenever a singular term supposits for a singular simple thing or a thing that is one all by itself, then it supposits personally. But when a singular composite or aggregated term that signifies things of different genera supposits for what it signifies, then such a term has simple supposition, as is plain for "white Socrates is an accidental being", in the sense in which it is true. But when such an aggregated term supposits for a singular simple thing of which it is accidentally predicated,[75] then it has personal supposition, as is plain for "white Socrates is a man", in the sense in which it is true.[76]

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[73] As indicated by Spade in his English translation of the *De puritate* (86, note 31), this is the case when the term stands in special compared simple supposition (see below, section 2.3.6.2).

[74] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 3. Spade, "Walter Burley on the Simple Supposition of Singular Terms," 8–9, offers a detailed analysis of that case. According to Burley's ontology of macro-objects and his semantics of concrete accidental terms, the complex singular term "*Socrates albus*" stands for the complex object "quality + substance". For the ontology of macro-objects, see Alessandro D. Conti, "Ontology in Walter Burley's Last Commentary on the *Ars vetus*," *Franciscan Studies* 50 (1990), 121–76, 140. For the semantics of concrete accidental terms, see Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 9: "Album vel significat accidens solum vel significat aggregatum ex subiecto et accidente." This is what Spade calls the "additive principle": a syntactically complex expression signifies the sum total of what its categorematic terms signify (Spade, "Walter Burley on the Simple Supposition," 9).

[75] If what is predicated is not accidentally, but essentially predicated (e.g. not *albus* but *rationalis* predicated of Socrates), the complex singular term at stake cannot have simple supposition. Its significate then boils down to a simple singificate as in the case of a singular discrete term (i.e. a proper name). See Spade, "Walter Burley on the Kinds of Simple Supposition," 9–10, as well as below, 111–14.

[76] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 20: "Et si quaeratur, an semper sit suppositio personalis quando terminus singularis supponit, dicendum quod quandocumque terminus singularis supponit pro re singulari simplici sive pro re per se una, tunc supponit personaliter. Sed quando terminus singularis compositus seu aggregatus significans res diversorum generum

Summing up, we can say that Burley gives two negative criteria for simple supposition.[77] The first is a linguistic criterion: common and singular terms can be in simple supposition, but no proper name can;[78] the second is ontological: universal and singular things can be the *supposita* of terms taken in simple supposition, but no simple singular thing can. Note that this result is nothing but the expression of the conjunction of two Burleyian semantic principles respectively stating that the singificates of names cannot be singular things (see above, section 2.1), and that every name taken in simple supposition stands for what it signifies (see above, 94 and 110)—and therefore, no name in simple supposition can stand for a mere (i.e. simple) singular thing such as Socrates.

2.3.6.2. The Division of Simple Supposition

When introducing simple supposition, Burley distinguishes between two approaches: the first says what simple supposition is; the second is concerned with the different kinds of simple supposition.[79] In the previous section (2.3.6.1), we considered what Burley has to say concerning the first approach. Now let us turn to what Burley says about the different kinds of simple supposition.[80]

Burley divides simple supposition in absolute and compared simple supposition. In turn, compared simple supposition is divided into compared general and compared special simple supposition.[81] Here is the passage in which those distinctions are introduced and explained:

> Simple supposition is absolute when a term supposits for its significate absolutely, not in comparison to its supposita, either as far as being-in is

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supponit pro eo quod significat, tunc talis terminus habet suppositionem simplicem, ut patet in ista, secundum quod est vera: 'Socrates albus est ens per accidens'. Ed quando talis terminus aggregatus supponit pro re singulari simplici, de qua accidentaliter praedicatur, tunc habet suppositionem personalem, ut patet in ista, secundum quod est vera: 'Socrates albus est homo'" (Spade's translation, 102).

[77] For a correlative use of those criteria, see below, section 2.3.7 on personal supposition.

[78] Note, however, that the case of the proper name seems to be a borderline case. See Burley, *De suppositionibus*, § 2.4, 37: "In termino discreto simplici non differunt suppositio simplex et suppositio personsalis, sed terminus talis supponens simpliciter et personaliter totaliter pro eodem supponit." According to that text, proper names can be said to have simple supposition, but in a way that is indiscernible from personal supposition.

[79] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 6: "Viso de suppositione materiali restat dicere de suppositione simplici. Et primo videndum est cuiusmodi suppositio est suppositio simplex, secundo quibus modis fit."

[80] On that matter and for a comparison between the divisions of simple supposition in the *De suppositionibus* and in the *Tractatus longior*, see the above-mentioned study of Paul Vincent Spade: "Walter Burley on the Kinds of Simple Supposition."

[81] See Burley's supposition tree above, 104.

concerned or as far as being-said-of[82] is concerned; but simple supposition is compared when a common term supposits for its significate in comparison to its supposita, or for some of its inferiors having supposita. In the first way, "Man is the worthiest creature among creatures" is true; in the second way, "Man is a species" is true. Compared simple supposition is divided into general and special supposition. This distinction applies in a special case of a general term having species and individuals under it, namely, in the case of the most general genera. When such a general term has general simple supposition, it supposits for its significate absolutely, and not for any of its inferiors. In this sense, "Substance is a most general genus" is true. But when it has special simple supposition, it supposits for the species and not for individuals. In this latter sense propositions like the following are true: "Substance is second substance."[83]

This may be schematically summarized as follows:

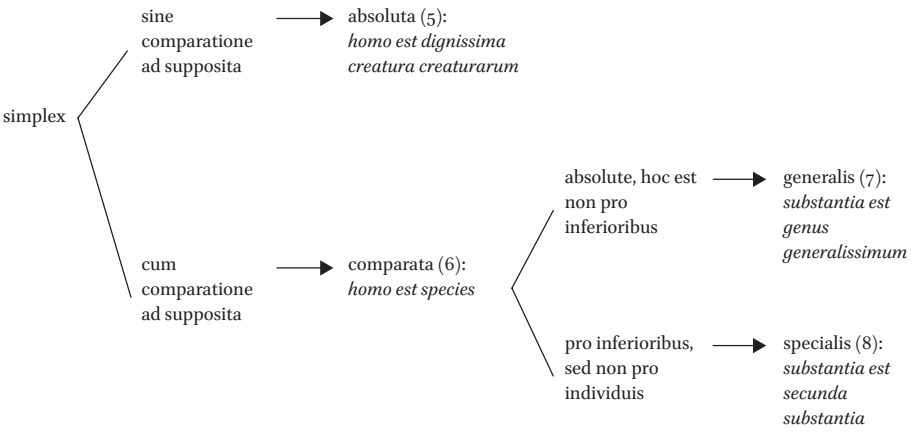

simplex
sine comparatione ad supposita
absoluta (5): *homo est dignissima creatura creaturarum*
cum comparatione ad supposita
comparata (6): *homo est species*
absolute, hoc est non pro inferioribus
generalis (7): *substantia est genus generalissimum*
pro inferioribus, sed non pro individuis
specialis (8): *substantia est secunda substantia*

Figure 3.4: The Division of Simple Supposition

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[82] In the earlier *De suppositionibus*, Burley had divided simple supposition into absolute and compared according to an Aristotelian criterion derived from *Categories* 2, 1a20–b9. See also *De interpretatione* 7, 17b39–40 and *Metaphysics* VII.13, 1038b11.

[83] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 11: "Suppositio simplex absoluta est quando terminus supponit pro suo significato absolute non in comparatione ad supposita nec quantum ad esse in, nec quantum ad dici de. Sed suppositio simplex comparata est quando terminus communis supponit pro suo significato in comparatione ad supposita vel pro aliquibus inferioribus suis habentibus supposita. Primo modo est haec vera: 'homo est dignissima creatura creaturarum', secundo modo est haec vera: 'homo est species'. Suppositio simplex comparata dividitur in suppositionem generalem et specialem. Et haec distinctio specialiter habet locum in termino generali habente sub se species et individua, scilicet in generibus generalissimis. Quando talis terminus generalis habet suppositionem simplicem generalem, tunc supponit pro sui significato absolute, ita quod non pro aliquo eius inferiori; et isto modo est vera: 'Substantia est genus generalissimum'. Sed quando habet suppositionem simplicem specialem, tunc supponit pro speciebus, ita quod non pro individuis. Et isto modo sunt tales propositiones verae: 'Substantia est secunda substantia'" (Spade's translation, 92–93).

Burley obtains this division by applying twice an analogous criterion which has to do with the relation of the significate of the term with either its *supposita* or its *inferiora*. When absolute and compared simple supposition are distinguished, the *supposita* at stake are individuals of a given species (human beings for the species "*homo*"); when general and special compared simple supposition are distinguished, the concerned *inferiora* are species. We may now add to our list the examples occurring in the schema above:

(5) *homo est dignissima creatura creaturarum* (man is the worthiest among the creatures).
(6) *homo est species* (man is a species).
(7) *substantia est genus generalissimum* (substance is a most general genus).
(8) *substantia est substantia secunda* (substance is a second substance).

In (5) "*homo*" stands for the human nature as such, that is, for the created human species in relation to other species, but not to its individuals; in (6), "*homo*" stands for the human nature as species (i.e. as the nature common to its individuals). Similarly, in (7), "*substantia*" stands for the category of substance, regardless of the different species of substances (physical, spiritual, etc.); in (8), "*substantia*" stands for the universal substance, predicable of any species of substance, as would be the case in "*corpus est substantia*", "*anima est substantia*", and so on. Note that even though "*Socrates est substantia*" is a true proposition, it is not a case of simple supposition because of the clause "*non pro individuis*"—a limitation that corroborates the hypothesis made above according to which singular discrete terms, that is, proper names, cannot be in simple supposition.[84]

The distinction between absolute and compared simple supposition recalls another distinction encountered above between first and second intentions as respectively absolute and compared concepts.[85] This is a clear sign that, for Burley, both the theories of intentions and of supposition are closely connected—remember that, for Burley, the objects of logic are nothing but second intentions joined to first intentions, that is, compared concepts such as the concept "*species*" joined to absolute ones such as "*homo*". In that sense, the proposition "*homo est species*" is not only the most consensual example of simple supposition, but it also neatly expresses a relation which is constitutive for logic (and its objects): the

[84] See above, section 2.3.6.1.
[85] See above, section 1.1.

relation between first- and second-order concepts (and their respective objects).

2.3.7. *Personal Supposition*

Whereas Burley characterizes simple supposition as the semantic relation between a term and its (whole) significate, personal supposition is presented as the semantic relation between a term and its *supposita*. Contrary to Ockham, Burley does not identify *supposita* and *significata*, and in that sense his semantics combine two distinct approaches: (1) the theory of simple supposition—as the theory of the significative use of words—deals with the intensional aspect of semantics; (2) by contrast, personal supposition is concerned with the extensional side of semantics.[86]

This view is coherent with the priority of signification over supposition: a term can only have supposition if it already has signification. In a passage of the *Tractatus longior*, however, Burley seems to imply that personal supposition is prior to simple supposition[87] because, for example, a word like "*homo*", although imposed to a common nature and thus signifying it, is normally or primarily used to talk about human beings, and not about the human nature. According to this empirical approach, personal supposition is indeed prior to simple and material suppositions. Those, says Burley, only occur secondarily and as a consequence of the presence of specific words such as "*species*" or "*disyllabum*" as predicated of "*homo*".[88] If there are no such specific predicates, the term supposits personally.[89] Consequently, Burley seems to allow for a kind of default supposition of the terms—an idea that bears some affinities with the (Parisian) notion of natural supposition (*suppositio naturalis*).[90]

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[86] See Kunze, *Satzwahrheit und sprachliche Verweisung*, 97–119, as well as Kunze's introduction and notes, in Burley, *Von der Reinheit der Kunst der Logik*, esp. XXVI–XLII and note 26, 198–200.

[87] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 9: "Intelligendum est quod terminus potens habere diversas suppositiones potest de virtute sermonis respectu cuiuscumque praedicati habere suppositionem personalem, quia illa est primaria acceptio vel suppositio termini."

[88] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 9–10: "Suppositionem tamen materialem vel simplicem non potest habere nisi respectu termini sibi convenientis secundum suppositionem simplicem vel materialem."

[89] This does not mean that in "*homo est species*", "*homo*" supposits personally. It only means that were it not for that specific predicate "*species*", "*homo*" would automatically supposit personally.

[90] Although the expression "*suppositio naturalis*" does not appear at all in Burley, he nonetheless suggests that a term considered for itself (*per se*) has a kind of default supposition—Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 10: "Unde *sicut analogum per se positum* non comparatum alicui participanti sibi pro secundario significato stat pro modo famosiori, *ita terminus*

2.3.7.1. The Definition of Personal Supposition

There are two passages in the *Tractatus longior* where Burley gives a description of personal supposition.[91] We quoted the first one when introducing the notion of formal supposition.[92] In substance, it said that we have a case of personal supposition when a term stands for its *suppositum*, that is, for a certain singular of which it is truly predicated. The second gives some more details as for the types of terms and *supposita* involved in personal supposition:

> Supposition is personal when a common term supposits for its inferiors, whether those inferiors are singulars or common things, whether they are things or utterances, or when a concrete accidental term or a compound term supposits for what it is accidentally predicated of.[93]

Two points have to be underlined here: first, personal supposition is not linked to any particular type of terms or *supposita*—common and singular terms supposit personally;[94] singular and common (or universal) things (*singularia vel communia*),[95] things (*res*) and words can be the *supposita* of terms suppositing personally. Second, personal supposition is linked with the predicability of the term at stake of its *suppositum* or

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*potens habere suppositiones diversas* non comparatus alicui participat sibi secundum suppositionem simplicem vel materialem, supponit solum personaliter" [my italics]. On natural supposition, see Lambertus Maria de Rijk, "The development of suppositio naturalis in mediaeval logic. Part I. Natural supposition as non-contextual supposition," *Vivarium* 9 (1971), 71–107; de Rijk, "The development of suppositio naturalis in medieval logic. Part II. Fourteenth century natural supposition as atemporal (omnitemporal) supposition," *Vivarium* 11 (1973), 43–79. Note that in this context Burley uses the opposition between primary and secondary significates as referring not to *significata* and *supposita*, but to usual (e.g. human beings for "*homo*") and nonusual (e.g. statues for "*homo*") *supposita*—see Spade's explanations in note 48, p. 91 of his English translation of Burley's *De puritate*.

[91] The earlier *De suppositionibus* lacks any passage of that sort. There (§ 2.4, 37–38), personal supposition is simply mentioned and Burley immediately goes on to divide it into its different modes.

[92] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 3, quoted above, note 65.

[93] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 3: "Suppositio personalis est quando terminus communis supponit pro suis inferioribus, sive illa inferiora sint singularia sive communia, sive sint res sive voces, vel quando terminus concretus accidentalis vel terminus compositus supponit pro illo de quo accidentaliter praedicatur" (Spade's translation, 82).

[94] Among singular terms, however, it seems that proper names and composed singular terms whose predicative parts are essentially related to their subjective parts (as in "*Sortes rationalis*") cannot have but personal supposition—or at least, if they also have simple supposition, then it is on an indiscernible mode (see above, note 78).

[95] In a proposition like "*Omnis species est sub genere*", the subject "*species*" supposits personally, because it supposits for its inferiors or *supposita*, which happen to be universals (species are common things). See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 20.

*supposita*.[96] The idea is the following: consider the (true) proposition *p*: "*S* is *P*", where *S* supposits for *x*. If the proposition *q*: "*x* is *S*" is true, then *S* supposits personally in *p*. Thus if we take the standard example of personal supposition:

(9) *homo currit* (a man is running),

proposition *q* becomes "*x est homo*", which is true: it is indeed true to say of everything "*homo*" stands for in (9) that it is a man. This, however, will not work in a proposition like *r*: "*homo est species*"—the standard example for simple supposition. Here, *q* is false, because it is not true that the *suppositum* of *S* in *r*—the human nature—is a man. Rather, it is that in virtue of which every man belongs to the species *homo*.

2.3.7.2. The Modes of Personal Supposition

What characterizes personal supposition as opposed to simple supposition is its extensional nature: one "personally" refers to (or supposits for) things one can count, even if those things, as we saw, are not necessarily singular things (universals can be counted too). The subdivisions—or modes—of personal supposition have to do with specific, contextually determined delimitations of the domain of countable things one is talking about.[97] These delimitations are often made by means of syncategorematic terms such as the universal quantifier "*omnis*".[98] Burley distinguishes five modes

[96] This idea is already present in the earlier *De suppositionibus* (§ 6.41, 60)—the context is not, however, a general description of personal supposition, but the explanation of the "rule of appellation" (see above, note 39)—and plays a central role in Ockham's conception of personal supposition as well. See Ockham, *Summa logicae* I. 63, 194–95 and I. 72, 217.

[97] It has been argued that there are in fact not one but two theories of supposition in the Middle Ages: one which would be the theory of supposition proper (concerned with reference), the other one being a theory of the modes of personal supposition (concerned with quantification). For a summary and discussion of the positions taken by modern scholars (and in particular by Spade) relative to that claim (originally made by Theodore K. Scott in his "Introduction" to Buridan's *Sophisms on Meaning and Truth* [New York: 1966], 30), see Gareth B. Matthews, "Two Theories of Supposition?" *Topoi* 16 (1997), 35–40.

[98] A syncategorematic term is a term which is not semantically autonomous—it only yields a stable or complete meaning *with* another (categorematic, that is, semantically autonomous) term. This does not mean, however, that syncategoremes do not mean anything at all. For instance, "*omnis*" means universal distribution, but until one does not know *what* is universally distributed, "*omnis*" remains semantically heteronomous ("*omnis homo*" becomes a categorematic expression by the adjunction of "*homo*" to "*omnis*"). On that matter, see the thematic issue (*Les syncatégorèmes*) of the journal *Histoire, épistémologie, langage* 25.2 (2003). Note that Burley also considers some verbs as syncategorematic expressions, in particular the copula "*est*" or verbs like "*incipit*" or "*desinit*" (to begin and to cease)—see respectively Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 54 and *Tractatus brevior*, 222.

of personal supposition: discrete (10), determinate (11), merely confused (12), confused and distributive mobile (13), and confused and distributive immobile (14). Here are the standard examples for each mode:

(10) *Socrates currit* (Socrates is running).
(11) *Aliquis homo currit* (some man is running).
(12) *Omnis homo est animal* (every man is an animal).
(13) *Omnis homo est animal* (every man is an animal).
(14) *omnis homo praeter Socratem currit* (every man except Socrates is running).

Discrete supposition (10) is exclusively encountered in proper names or semantically equivalent demonstrative pronouns[99]—in that case, the countable things are a priori limited to one single thing.[100] A common term has determinate supposition (11) when one can disjunctively "descend" from it to all its singulars[101]—if you consider the totality of men, the proposition "*aliquis homo currit*" tells you that one among them is running, but, contrary to what is the case with discrete supposition, it does not tell you which one. Therefore, the descent has to be disjunctive. A common term is in merely confused supposition (12) when one cannot "descend" to its singulars either conjunctively or disjunctively, and "ascent" is possible from any of its singulars.[102] The proposition "*omnis homo est animal*" offers no possibility of "descent" under "*animal*": the following inference is

[99] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 19: "Suppositio discreta est quando nomen proprium supponit vel pronomen demonstrativum demonstrans idem quod proprium nomen significat, ut: 'Socrates est homo', 'iste homo est homo'."

[100] This does not mean, of course, that there can be only one Socrates on earth. It only means that, when suppositing discretely, "*Socrates*" refers to just one individual. If there are more than one Socrates living simultaneously, one can always specify which one is meant by adding further limitations.

[101] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 20: "Suppositio determinata <est> quando terminus communis supponit disiunctive pro suis suppositis, ita quod contingit descendere ad omnia sua supposita sub disiunctione, ut patet in ista: 'aliquis homo currit'." "Descent" means here something like "inference from". It can be disjunctive or conjunctive. *Exemplum primi*: from "*omnis homo*" conjunctive descent (*omnis, ergo iste, et ille, et* . . .) is allowed; *exemplum secundi*: from "*aliquis homo*", only disjunctive descent (*aliquis homo, ergo iste, vel ille, vel* . . .) is allowed. The converse "ascent" is something like an "induction from". On that topic, see Paul Vincent Spade, "The Logic of the Categorical. Mediaeval Theory of Ascent and Descent," in *Meaning and Inference in Mediaeval Philosophy. Studies in the Memory of Jan Pinborg*, ed. Norman Kretzmann (Dordrecht: 1988), 187–224. For a detailed study of the modes of personal supposition (in Burley, among others), see Spade, *Thoughts, Words and Things*, Chapter 9, 277–308.

[102] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 21: "Suppositio confusa tantum est quando terminus communis supponit pro pluribus, ita quod infertur ex quolibet illorum et ad nullum illorum contingit descendere nec copulative nec disiunctive. Isto modo supponit praedicatum in ista: 'omnis homo est animal'."

illegitimate: "*omnis homo est animal, ergo omnis homo est hoc animal, et/vel omnis homo est illud animal, et/vel . . .*"; by contrast, one can infer from "*omnis homo est hoc animal*" that "*omnis homo est animal*", and thus there is a possibility of "ascent" to "*animal*"—it is true of every single man to say that he is that animal, therefore, it is true that every man is an animal. Confused distributive mobile supposition (13)[103] occurs when "descent" is possible to every singular in virtue of the distribution exercised by the syncategoreme "*omnis*".[104] Here, contrary to determinate supposition (11), the descent under "*homo*" in "*omnis homo*" is possible disjunctively *and* conjunctively. Finally, confused distributive immobile supposition (14) occurs "when a common term is distributed for its *supposita* and one cannot descend to those *supposita* with respect to that with respect to which the distribution is made".[105] This dense formulation points to the following limitation: consider the true proposition "every man except Socrates is running". In that case, even if it is (collectively) true of "every man except Socrates" that he is running, this is not (distributively) true of each man: for example, it does not follow that "Plato except Socrates" is running.[106]

### 2.3.8. *Logic and Supposition Theory*

We began our survey of Burley's supposition theory by describing somewhat naively the task of the theory as the providing of rules which allow speakers to know exactly about what they are talking. And it seems that supposition theory indeed serves such a purpose; but at the same time, it

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[103] Burley divides his treatment of confused and distributive (mobile or immobile) supposition into two sections: the first considers these kinds of supposition in absolute terms; the second is concerned with the same kinds of supposition, but in relative pronouns. See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 24 "Suppositio confusa et distributiva dividitur, quia quaedam est mobilis et quaedam immobilis; et utraque est duplex, quaedam absoluta et quaedam respectiva. Primo tamen est dicendum de suppositione absoluta"; and 28: "Dicto de suppositione absoluta dicendum est breviter de suppositione relativa. Suppositio vero relativa debetur termino relativo, accipiendo relativum secundum quod est antelatae rei recordativum." For the sake of brevity, we will only consider absolute terms.

[104] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 24: "Suppositio confusa et distributiva mobilis et absoluta est quando sub termino habente talem suppositionem contingit descendere absolute ad quodlibet suppositum illius termini virtute distributionis, ut patet; nam subiectum huius propositionis: 'omnis homo currit' supponit confuse et distributive, quia de virtute distributionis contingit descendere ad quodlibet suppositum hominis."

[105] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 25: "Suppositio vero confusa et distributiva immobilis est quando terminus communis distribuitur pro suppositis et non contingit descendere ad illa supposita respectu illius respectu cuius fit distributio" (Spade's translation, 107).

[106] See Burley, *Tractatus longior*, 25: "Verbi gratia, in ista: 'omnis homo praeter Socratem currit', iste terminus 'homo' distribuitur respectu exceptionis, et non contingit descendere respectu eiusdem exceptionis; non enim sequitur: omnis homo praeter Socratem currit, ergo Plato praeter Socratem currit."

also is obvious that this is not an end in itself. For one can legitimately ask why it is useful at all to know exactly about what one is talking. Once supposition theory is considered not from the inside—as we did until now—but as a part of logic, the last question raised gets an obvious answer: since "the utility of logic consists in providing a technique to distinguish the true from the false in the particular sciences",[107] it clearly appears that the ultimate reason why the logician needs a sophisticated tool such as supposition theory is his or her interest in truth and falsity: no proposition can be classified as true or false until it has been precisely established what exactly that proposition is about. In brief: for Burley, as for his fellow medieval logicians, supposition theory is a logical tool to determine the conditions under which a given proposition is true. But what exactly is truth? The next—and last—section of the present study will be concerned with Burley's answer to that abyssal question.

### 3. *The Semantics of Propositions*

Whereas the basic link between supposition theory and truth is provided by the task which, within logic, falls to the former—that is, to determine the truth-conditions of propositions—the constitutive relation between the latter and propositions is expressed by the fact that within language, propositions are the only bearers of truth and falsity.[108] Because propositions are made out of terms, they have a signification somehow resulting from the semantic values of their parts; but because propositions are alethic expressions, their semantic analysis requires that some questions be addressed, that do not apply to theirs constituents. For example: (1) What does it mean for a linguistic expression to be true or false? (2) What is it that makes a linguistic expression true or false? (3) And how are what a proposition signifies and what makes it true related? In what

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[107] See Burley, *In Porph.*, *prologus*, fol. a2vb: "Et est sciendum quod utilitas logice est facultas seu potestas discernendi artificialiter verum a falso in singulis scientiis." See also his *De suppositionibus*, § 1.1, 31, where the link between supposition, proposition, and syllogism is explicitly made.

[108] In what follows, and if not otherwise specified, we use "proposition" in the sense of the medieval "*propositio*", i.e. of a declarative sentence. For the Aristotelian background of the exclusive alethicity of propositions see Aristotle, *Perihermeneias* 1, 16a9–16. For a general survey of medieval theories of truth, see Gabriel Nuchelmans, *Theories of the Proposition. Ancient and Mediaeval Conceptions of the Bearers of Truth and Falsity* (Amsterdam: 1973), as well as Norman Kretzmann, "Medieval Logicians on the Meaning of the *propositio*," *The Journal of Philosophy* 67 (1970), 767–87. See also Gabriel Nuchelmans, "The Semantics of Propositions," in *The Cambridge History of Later Mediaeval Philosophy*, 197–210.

follows, we will gather some elements of response by giving an overview of Burley's propositional semantics.[109] First of all, however, Burley's general notion of truth—be it linguistic, that is, logical or not—has to be sketched.

### 3.1. *The Concept of Truth*

The general notion of truth is defined by means of a relation of adequation (*adaequatio*). The terms of that relation are the things (*res*) on the one side, and the intellect (*intellectus*) on the other. Burley considers the two possible directions of the relation of adequation: truth can be either an adequation of the thing relative to the intellect, or of the intellect relative to the thing.[110] Two further distinctions are introduced regarding the nature of the involved intellect (divine or human) and the type of mental act involved (apprehension or composition), so that we obtain the following general typology of truth:[111]

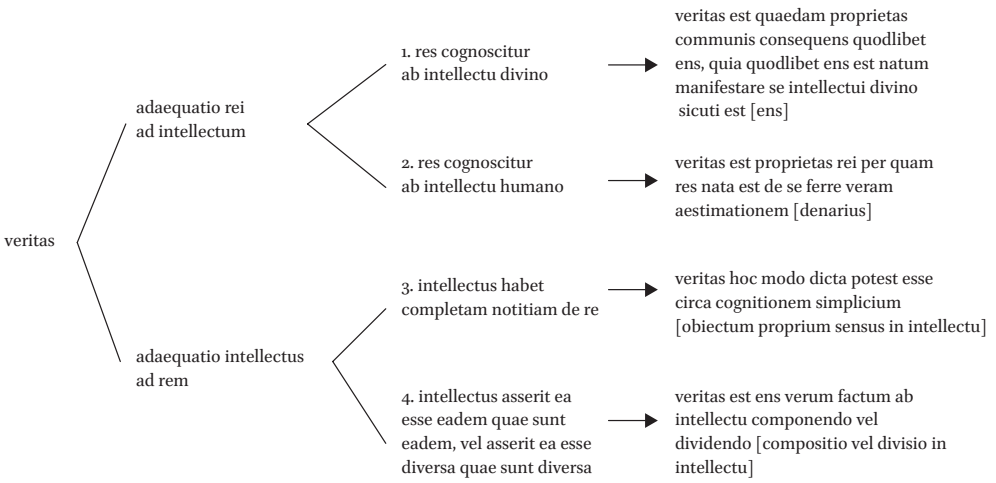

veritas
adaequatio rei ad intellectum
adaequatio intellectus ad rem
1. res cognoscitur ab intellectu divino
2. res cognoscitur ab intellectu humano
3. intellectus habet completam notitiam de re
4. intellectus asserit ea esse eadem quae sunt eadem, vel asserit ea esse diversa quae sunt diversa
veritas est quaedam proprietas communis consequens quodlibet ens, quia quodlibet ens est natum manifestare se intellectui divino sicuti est [ens]
veritas est proprietas rei per quam res nata est de se ferre veram aestimationem [denarius]
veritas hoc modo dicta potest esse circa cognitionem simplicium [obiectum proprium sensus in intellectu]
veritas est ens verum factum ab intellectu componendo vel dividendo [compositio vel divisio in intellectu]

Figure 3.5: Burley's general typology of truth

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[109] For specific answers to those three questions, see below, section 3.2.5.

[110] Note the difference with the classical (and direction-neutral) definition of truth as "*adaequatio intellectus et rei*". On that definition and its origins, see J.T. Muckle, "Isaac Israeli's Definition of Truth," *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age* 8 (1933), at 5–8. See also Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate* 1.1.

[111] See Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.23–1.24, 59–61. See also Burley, *In Perih.*, cap. 1, fol. k4ra–b, where Burley gives the same typology.

While the level of language proper (written or spoken) does not appear in that typology, linguistic terminology is present in the fourth type of truth distinguished by Burley: there, the intellect is said "to assert" and "to compose" or "to divide", the two last expressions being synonyms of "to affirm" and "to negate" respectively. This fourth type of truth is the one which pertains to the logician, for it is in that sense, says Burley, that Aristotle has to be understood when he states that there is no truth without composition or division.[112] Thus logical truth—that is, truth insofar as it pertains to the logician—is produced by the human intellect when by composing (or dividing) it produces certain mental complexes that are adequate to extramental things:

> Hence I say that the intellect makes true beings by composing those things together which are united in reality, or by dividing those things from one another which are different in reality. Thus, if the intellect asserts that some things are the same, then it composes them together; but if it asserts that some things are different, then it divides them from one another. Therefore, truth and falsity which concern composition and division of the intellect are made by the intellect and have a subjective being in the intellect. But when the intellect is composing or dividing rightly, then truth is in the intellect; and when the intellect neither composes nor divides rightly, then the intellection is false.[113]

As we shall see, those propositions composed by the intellect are nothing but mental propositions. This text expresses one of Burley's most fundamental ideas with respect to logical truth: it occurs when the intellect, through its composing or dividing activity, adequately reflects relations obtaining between extramental things. In other words, according to Burley, logical truth is founded in ontological truth. And while a logical truth,

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[112] Aristotle, *Perihermeneias* 1, 16a13. Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.24, 60: (about the types 1–3) "Sed de vero nullo istorum modorum dicto intelligitur illud quod dicitur in littera: Circa compositionem et divisionem etc. Et ideo respondeo: videndum est cuiusmodi est illud verum vel falsum quod est circa compositionem et divisionem." (The introduction of type 4 follows immediately.)

[113] See Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.24, 60–61: "Unde dico quod intellectus facit entia vera componendo ea ad invicem quae in re sunt unita aut dividendo ea ab invicem quae in re sunt diversa. Si enim intellectus asserit aliqua esse eadem, tunc componit illa ad invicem; sed si asserit aliqua esse diversa, tunc dividit ea ab invicem. Unde veritas et falsitas quae sunt circa compositionem et divisionem intellectus efficiuntur ab intellectu et habent esse subiective in intellectu. Quando enim intellectus recte componit vel recte dividit, tunc est veritas in intellectu et quando intellectus non componit recte vel non dividit recte, . . . tunc est intellectus falsus."

as a mental proposition, originates from a peculiar relation between the intellect and the extramental world, it is expressed in the propositions of written or spoken language. But how exactly are those elements related together? Burley's fascinating and problematic theory of the proposition offers an answer to that question.

### 3.2. *Burley's Theory of the Proposition*

Burley exposed his theory of the proposition in five different texts written between 1301 and 1337.[114] Since every exposition has its own peculiarities and there are some manifest differences between them, it has been argued that Burley does not have one, but at least two theories of the proposition.[115] The main argument for that split is the fact that Burley at first (in *QPh*, *QAPo*, and *CM*) distinguishes four types of propositions—written, spoken, mental subjective, and mental objective—whereas in the last formulations (*In Cat.* and *In Perih.*) he seems to add a fifth type of proposition which is neither written, spoken, nor mental, but nonlinguistic and extramental (a complex of things). The central point here is the interpretation of the notion of *propositio in re* (a notion which occurs in four of the five formulations of the theory) which originally refers to a type of mental proposition and is used later on as well for a real extramental complex. Here, as elsewhere,[116] we want to argue that the equivocation on the expression "*propositio in re*" is not a sufficient reason to distinguish between two theories of the proposition in Burley. On the contrary, this equivoque serves a heuristic purpose. The expression "*propositio in re*" refers to a level in the Burleyian propositional device which is present from the earliest formulation of the theory onwards. Its equivocal use by Burley is designed to make his readers grasp his fundamental and

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[114] Namely in the *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias* (1301) (= *QPh*); the *Quaestiones super librum Posteriorum* (before 1307) (= *QAPo*); the *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias* (around 1310) (= *CM*); and two of the commentaries of the last commentary on the *Ars vetus* of 1337: the commentary on the *Categories* (mainly in the prologue) (= *In Cat.*) and the commentary on the *Perihermeneias* (= *In Perih.*). In the rest of the present section (and for the sake of brevity), we will refer to Burley's works by means of the abbreviations indicated just above.

[115] For a survey of the different interpretations of Burley's theory of the proposition in recent literature, see below, note 118.

[116] See Cesalli, *Le réalisme propositionnel. Sémantique et ontologie des propositions*, 179–240 and 398–400.

constant theoretical intuition: the objective foundation of logical truth in extramental reality.[117]

### 3.2.1. *The Logical Bearers of Truth and Falsity*

Logical bearers of truth and falsity are alethic complexes of signs—that is, propositions. Burley basically distinguishes three types of propositions: written, spoken, and mental:

> But a written proposition signifies a vocal proposition and a vocal proposition signifies a mental proposition, that is, a proposition composed out of concepts. Now, I ask whether a proposition composed out of concepts is the ultimate significate, a significate that does not further signify anything, or whether it further signifies something. The first possibility has to

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[117] The *propositio in re* has been interpreted in different ways by different scholars: (1) Some focus on the early formulations of the theory (in *QPh*, *CM*): Dominik Perler, *Der propositionale Wahrheitsbegriff im 14. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: 1992), 93–96; E. Karger, "Mental Sentences According to Burley and the Early Ockham," *Vivarium* 34.2 (1996) 192–230 (199); Paola Müller, "*Utrum propositio mentalis componitur ex rebus vel ex conceptibus*. Un dibattito trà Ockham e Burleigh," *Veritas* 42.3 (1997) 659–69; A. Robert, "Les propositions singulières chez Guillaume d'Ockham," in *Medieval Theories on Assertive and Non-Assertive Language*, ed. Alfonso Maierù and Luisa Valente (Firenze: 2004), 377–99. (2) Other scholars concentrate on the motivations for Burley to introduce such a problematic notion as the *propositio in re*: Martin Lenz, *Mentale Sätze. Wilhelm von Ockhams Thesen zur Sprachlichkeit des Denkens* (Stuttgart: 2003), 62–69; E. Perini-Santos, "Por que construir uma proposição com coisas? As razões de Gualter Burleigh em 1301," *Discurso* 38.2 (2009); S. Meier-Oeser, "Burley's *propositio in re*". (3) Some studies focus on the late formulations of the theory (*In Cat.*, *In Perih.*): J. Pinborg, "Walter Burleigh on the Meaning of Propositions," *Classica et Mediaevalia* 28 (1967), 394–404; G. Nuchelmans, *Theories of the Proposition. Ancient and Mediaeval Conceptions of the Bearers of Truth and Falsity* (Amsterdam: 1973), 219–25; P. Kunze, "*Satzwahrheit und Sprachliche Verweisung*," 336–40. (4) Some scholars intend to give an interpretation of the theory taking into account all of its known formulations: Conti, "Significato e verità"; Alain de Libera, *La référence vide. Théories de la proposition* (Paris: 2002), 130–37; Joël Biard, "Le statut des énoncés dans les commentaires du *Peri Hermeneias* de Gauthier Burley," in *The Commentaries on Peri Hermeneias in the Middle Ages*, ed. H.A.G. Braakhuis and C.H. Kneepkens (Haaren: 2004), 103–18; C. Rode, "Sätze und Dinge. Die *propositio in re* bei Walter Burley und anderen," *Bochumer Philosophisches Jahrbuch für Antike und Mittelalter* 10 (2005), 67–90, at 70–78; L. Cesalli, *Le réalisme propositionnel*, 166–240. As for the question whether Burley has one or more theories of the proposition, there is no consensus among scholars. Defenders of a plurality of theories include, for example: J. Biard, A.D. Conti, P. Müller, and C. Rode. On the contrary, A. de Libera, S. Meier-Oeser, and L. Cesalli see Burley as developing the same theoretical intuition from 1301 to 1337. Finally, the question of the ontological status of the *propositio in re* has been answered in different ways: as a state of affairs ( J. Pinborg, A. de Libera); as a fact (P. Kunze, D. Perler, S. Meier-Oeser, P. Müller); as a fact or an act of judging (G. Nuchelmans); as a complex, immanent intentional object (L. Cesalli); where an early and a late theory are distinguished, we have the following readings. Early: intentional object (A.D. Conti), state of affairs (C. Rode), fact (J. Biard). Late: fact (A.D. Conti), a kind of mixed entity, partly mental, partly extramental (C. Rode, J. Biard).

> be dismissed because the concepts out of which a mental proposition is composed are themselves signs. Therefore, the whole proposition composed out of concepts is a sign.[118]

According to this passage, the *ordo significationis* is clear: a written proposition signifies a vocal one, a vocal proposition signifies a mental one which is itself a sign. But what does a mental proposition itself signify? This is the very point where Burley's theory starts to be original . . . and problematic. The crucial theoretical move will be to distinguish between two types of mental propositions—one of them being at the same time a sign and a significate, the other being merely a sign.

### 3.2.2. *Types of Mental Propositions*

In the first formulation of the theory (i.e. in the *QPh*), the mental proposition as a complex of signifying concepts—let us call it *pms*—is simply missing. Burley speaks indeed of a mental proposition but only as a significate, and not as a sign.[119] Furthermore, this mental proposition is said to be intellectually (as opposed to really) composed out of things (as opposed to concepts).[120] Here, Burley does not use the expression "*propositio in re*", but calls propositions composed out of things "mental propositions". In the very first formulation of the theory, therefore, we have an ambiguity (if not a paradox) concerning the mental proposition: if it is composed out of things, how can it be mental? But if it is a mental proposition, how can it be composed out of things?

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[118] See Burley, *In Cat.*, *prol.*, fol. c3vb–c4ra: "Sed propositio in scripto significat propositionem in voce, propositio in voce significat propositionem in conceptu, scilicet propositionem compositam ex conceptibus. Quero tunc aut propositio composita ex conceptibus sit ultimum significatum, scilicet quod ulterius non significat, aut significat aliquid ulterius. Non est dare primum, quia conceptus ex quibus propositio componitur in mente significant. Igitur tota propositio composita ex conceptibus significat." For the sign-character of the concepts (or *passiones animae*), see Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.11, 53, text quoted above, note 37.

[119] See Burley, *Quaestiones super librum Perihermeneias*, § 3.553, 250: "Unde breviter: illud quod significetur per propositionem prolatam sive significetur mediate sive immediate, dum modo sit tale quod non significat aliquid aliud ulterius, illud voco propositionem in mente."

[120] See Burley, *Quaestiones super librum Perihermeneias*, § 3.55, 248: "Et enunciatio in mente componitur ex illis quae intellectus intelligit esse eadem sive sint voces sive res extra"; and § 3.553–3.554, 249–50: "Circa enunciationem in mente sciendum quod ista componitur ex rebus quas intellectus asserit esse eadem et diversa. . . . Ulterius est sciendum quod propositio in mente non componitur ex rebus compositione reali sicut domus componitur ex lignis et lapidibus, sed solum est ibi compositio intellectualis quae fit ex hoc quod intellectus intelligit aliqua esse eadem et diversa."

This obvious difficulty[121] is surmounted in the next formulation of the theory. In the *QAPo*, Burley distinguishes a *propositio proposita tantum* (a merely proposed proposition)—let us call it *pmo*—a *propositio proponens tantum* (a merely proposing proposition) and a *propositio proponens et proposita* (a proposing and proposed proposition).[122] The *propositio proponens et proposita* is the missing *pms* of the *QPh*, and *pmo*, as significate of *pms*, is itself a mental proposition, but of another type: contrary to *pms* which has a subjective being in the intellect, *pmo* has an objective being in the intellect.[123]

How exactly is the difficulty encountered in the *QPh* solved then? The solution consists in the explanation of the sense of "*res*" (things) in *QPh*: in the context of Burley's theory of the proposition, "*res*" does not mean a thing in the extramental world, but a cognitive content, objectively present in the intellect:

> To the last <argument> it is answered by negating the following inference: "it is composed out of things, therefore it is an extra-mental thing", because this composition is not a real composition, but an intelligible or intellectual one. . . . Hence, a demonstrative syllogism composed out of things neither has a subjective being in the soul, nor a subjective being out of the soul, but only an objective being in the soul.[124]

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[121] Burley recognizes the difficulty by acknowledging, for example, that the *enunciatio in mente* is a mental proposition whose parts are extramental (!). See *Quaestiones super librum Perihermeneias*, § 3.623, 252: "Dico quod enunciatio habet esse subiectivum in anima et tamen suae partes non; unde compositum compositione intellectuali habet esse alicubi ubi suae partes non habent esse."

[122] See Burley, *Quaestiones super librum Posteriorum*, 2.49: "Nam quaedam est propositio proposita tantum, et illa propositio est propositio passive dicta; et quaedam est propositio proponens tantum; et quaedam est propositio prop<on>ens et proposita. Propositio primo modo dicta componitur ex rebus compositione intellectuali et non compositione reali; et isto modo propositio accipitur pro signato. Propositio secundo modo dicta componitur ex vocibus significativis; et isto modo propositio accipitur pro signo. Propositio tertio modo accepta componitur ex conceptibus."

[123] The distinction between *esse subiective* and *esse obiective* in the intellect can be explained as follows: a mental act or a concept has a subjective being in the soul, because it is in the soul like an accident in a substance; a thing can be said to have an objective being in the intellect when that thing is the object of a cognitive act. In that sense, a thing objectively present in the intellect is the objective content of a cognitive mental act. Extramental things have per definition a subjective being. For that distinction, see Jan Pinborg, *Logik und Semantik im Mittelalter. Ein Überblick* (Stuttgart: 1972), 203.

[124] See Burley, *Quaestiones super librum Posteriorum*, 2.53: "Ad ultimum dicitur negando istam consequentiam 'componitur ex rebus, ergo est res extra animam', quia ista compositio non est compositio realis, sed intelligibilis sive intellectualis. . . . Unde syllogismus demonstrativus compositus ex rebus nec habet esse in anima subiective nec esse extra animam subiective, sed solum esse obiective." Burley speaks here about the demonstrative

"*Propositio in re*" is the name Burley will give in the next formulation of the theory to that proposition which is only a significate without being itself a sign and which only exists objectively in the intellect.

3.2.3. *The* Propositio in re *as the Ultimate Significate of Propositions*

Before 1310 but most probably after 1307,[125] Burley introduced the *propositio in re* in *CM*, not describing a new level in his propositional device, but naming an already existing level: the level at which the semantic chain of the logical bearers of truth and falsity leads with necessity, that is, the level of the ultimate significate of written, spoken, and mental propositions (*pms*). The *propositio in re* is introduced in the answer to a relativist objection: if the truth of a proposition is in the intellect as in a subject (that is, if it exists subjectively in the intellect), then there will be as many truths as there are intellects.[126] Here is Burley's answer:

> To that <objection> it must be said that there is a twofold proposition in the intellect: one is made by the intellect and has a subjective being in the intellect; the other is a proposition which only has an objective being in the intellect. Hence, speaking of this proposition "man is an animal" according to the kind of being it has in the intellect, <one can say that> in one way it is made by the intellect when it asserts that man and animal are the same; in another way, this <proposition> "man is an animal" has objective being in the intellect only. In other words, we can say that one is a proposition *in re* and the other a proposition in the intellect, calling the proposition which only has an objective being in the intellect *propositio in re* and the other which has a subjective being in the intellect *propositio in intellectu*.[127]

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syllogism and not about the proposition, but what he says also concerns the immediate parts of syllogisms, that is, propositions.

[125] In *QAPo* (written before 1307), § 2.53, 63, Burley, after having stated that a demonstrative syllogism is *intellectually* composed out of extramental things (and therefore is not an extramental thing itself), says that his reader will be able to appreciate by himself *somewhere else* whether his thesis has to be accepted or not: "An ista responsio valeat patebit *alias*." Here Burley is most probably alluding to the *Quaestiones* on the *Perihermeneias* (q. 3) and to the middle commentary on the same Aristotelian treatise (ed. Brown, 61).

[126] See Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.25, 61.

[127] See Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.26, 61: "Ad istud dicendum quod in intellectu est duplex propositio: una quae efficitur ab intellectu et habet esse subiectivum in intellectu . . . Alia est propositio quae solum habet esse obiectivum in intellectu. Unde loquendo de ista 'homo est animal' secundum esse quod habet in intellectu: sic uno modo efficitur ab intellectu ex hoc quod intellectus asserit hominem et animal esse idem; alio modo ista 'homo est animal' habet esse obiectivum in intellectu solum. Et alia est propositio quae habet esse subiectivum in intellectu et alia quae solum habet esse obiectivum in intellectu. Sub aliis verbis: possumus dicere quod quaedam est propositio in re et quaedam in intellectu, appellando illam propositionem quae solum habet esse

Thus the *enunciatio in mente* of *QPh*, the *propositio proposita tantum* of *QAPo*, and the *propositio in re* of *CM* fulfill the same function—they are the ultimate significate of other (logical) types of propositions—and are a certain type of mental propositions, namely propositions existing only objectively in the intellect (*pmo*). Burley's motivation for introducing the *propositio in re* is twofold: on the one hand, the transitivity of signification requires that the chain of signifying and signified entities comes to an end—an ultimate significate is needed;[128] on the other hand, the relativist thread requires an objectivizing reaction: propositional truth cannot be a private matter—an objective foundation is needed.[129]

### 3.2.4. *The Ontological Foundation of Logical Truth via Complex Intentional Objects*

The *propositio in re* also appears in the last formulations of the theory—in *In Cat.* and *In Perih.*, both dated from 1337. These texts offer the strongest arguments to the tenants of the "two-theories-interpretation" of Burley's propositional semantics[130] as Burley can be understood as speaking of the *propositio in re* as being a real complex distinct from any type of mental

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obiectivum in intellectu propositio in re et aliam quae habet esse subiectivum in intellectu propositio in intellectu."

[128] Thus Burley acknowledges a type of proposition (the *propositio in re*) which is not a sign. This is a novelty in the history of medieval logic.

[129] As for the questions of the sources and influence of Burley's theory of the *propositio in re*, one can state the following: two authors may have influenced Burley—John Duns Scotus (he speaks of the significate of propositions as a *compositio rerum*) and Boethius of Dacia (he speaks of a *triplex compositio*, i.e. *in rebus*, *apud intellectum*, *apud sermonem* in the sense of a *triplex propositio*), but Burley seems to be the first to introduce the expression "*propositio in re*"; in authors writing roughly during the same period as Burley, we find mentions of the *propositio in re* (without any explicit reference to him) in Franciscus de Mayronis, the Pseudo-Campsall, and the anonymous author of the *Logica "Ad rudium"*; John Wyclif mentions the *propositio in re* and explicitly links it with Burley—see Cesalli, *Le réalisme propositionnel*, 61–62; 128–30; 218–24; 330–38. For further authors who discuss the possibility of a real proposition (William Milverley, Franciscus de Prato), see Rode, "Sätze und Dinge," 78–87; finally, Gabriel Nuchelmans points to late medieval mentions of the *propositio in re* in authors such as Petrus Niger, Petrus Tartaretus, Johann Heinrich Alsted, and Domingo de Soto—see Gabriel Nuchelmans, *Late-Scholastic and Humanist Theories of the Proposition* (Amsterdam: 1980), 10–13 and 193–94 (Alsted does not speak of a *propositio in re*, but of a *thema reale*). Laurent Cesalli, "*Propositio in re*", in I. Attucha, D. Calma, C. Koenig Pralong, I. Zavattero eds., *Mots médiévaux offerts à Ruedi Imbach*, (Porto: 2011), 591–603.

[130] See above, note 117. For a detailed analysis of these arguments, see Cesalli, *Le réalisme propositionnel. Sémantique et ontologie des propositions*, 224–28.

propositions.[131] In fact—but this is an object of controversy[132]—I believe that there are at least two good reasons to think that Burley is not changing his mind, but simply (and finally) making explicit the original ambiguity of the theory concerning the mental *or*/*and* extramental nature of the ultimate significates of the logical bearers of truth and falsity.

First, Burley explicitly links his exposition of the theory in *In Cat.* and *In Perih.* with the earlier expositions,[133] implying that he is giving a new exposition of an old theory—why would he do so, if he were exposing another theory? Second, Burley unambiguously states that there is no proposition totally composed outside of the soul—which implies that there cannot be any *propositio in re* in the literal sense of the expression:

> In every proposition, there is something material and something formal. What is formal in a proposition is the copula copulating the predicate with the subject and this copula is in the intellect because it is a composition or a division of the intellect. What is material in a proposition, however, is the subject and the predicate. Therefore I say that no proposition is composed out of things totally outside of the soul. Hence since there are three types of propositions, one in locution, one in the mind and one which is signified

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[131] See Burley, *In Cat.*, cap. *de priori,* fol. g6ra–b: "Et ex hoc patet quod per propositionem in voce et etiam in conceptu significatur aliqua res complexa que non est proprie aliqua res precise significata per subiectum nec res significata per predicatum sed aggregatum ex his et illa res que est ultimum et adequatum significatum propositionis in voce et in conceptu est quoddam ens copulatum et propter hoc potest dici propositio in re sicut declaratum est in principio huius libri"; fol. h1rb: "Sciendum quod propositio habet esse quatuor modis: scilicet in scripto, in prolatione et in mente et etiam in re ut visum est superius in isto libro. Propositio in mente est duplex quia quedam habet esse subiective in mente et talis propositio componitur ex conceptibus et quedam est propositio habens esse obiective in intellectu et huiusmodi propositio componitur solum secundum considerationem intellectus et ex partibus habentibus solum esse obiective in intellectu sive sint voces preterite sive future et sic de aliis"; *In Perih.*, cap. 1, fol. k4rb: "Sed utrum sit aliqua propositio composita ex rebus extra animam dictum est supra in principio libri praedicamentorum. Supposito vero quod non sit aliqua propositio in re composita ex rebus, ut communiter dicitur, est dubium quid ex parte rei correspondeat veritati et falsitati propositionis in mente et in prolatione. Oportet enim quod ei correspondeat aliquid in re per quod tunc dicamus quod verum est quod propositio in mente et in prolatione est vera, quia sic significat sicut est in re. Ad hoc igitur quod propositio sit vera oportet quod sit in re sicut propositio significat et per consequens veritati propositionis in mente et in voce et in scripto correspondet aliquid proportionale. Dicendum est ut mihi videtur quod ad hoc quod aliquid sit verum oportet quod veritati propositionis in mente in prolatione et in scripto correspondeat identitas vel diversitas seu non identitas istorum pro quibus supponit subiectum et predicatum."

[132] See above, note 117.

[133] See Burley, *In Cat.*, *prol.*, fol. c3vb: "Ad illud dubium, <scilicet utrum enunciatio componitur ex rebus,> recolo me dixisse et in scriptis relinquisse quod intellectus potest facere propositionem ex quibuscumque." See also ibid., cap. *de priori*, fol. g6rb and *In Perih.*, cap. 1, fol. k4rb (texts quoted above, note 131).

> by the proposition in the mind and which can be called *propositio in re*, the first type of propositions, that is, a proposition in locution, is totally outside of the soul. But the proposition composed out of concepts is totally in the intellect. And the composition composed out of things is partly in the intellect and partly outside of the intellect. As for its formal part, it is in the intellect, but as for its material parts, it is totally outside of the intellect.[134]

Just as names alone, in whichever combination, will never produce a proposition, so the material parts of the *propositio in re* will never be a proposition. However, in *In Perih.*, Burley says that something corresponds *in re* to the copula of a true proposition[135]—namely a relation of identity (for an affirmative proposition) and of nonidentity (for a negative one). But this does not amount to saying that there is a *propositio in re* in the literal sense—no more than the fact that Socrates corresponds to my representation of Socrates implies that there is, besides Socrates himself, a representation of Socrates in the outer world.

So what does Burley want to say by pointing to (1) the extramental existence of the material parts of the *propositio in re* and (2) an extramental correspondent of its (mental) copula? Probably nothing else than this: although there cannot be any *propositio in re* in the literal sense of the expression, nevertheless the requirement of objectivity for logical truth-bearers is ultimately fulfilled by the existence of real extramental complexes upon which *propositiones in re*, as mental objective propositions (*pmo*), that is, as complex intentional objects, are founded.[136]

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[134] See Burley, *In Cat.*, *prol.*, fol. c4rb: "In omni propositione est aliquod materiale et aliquod formale. Formale in propositione est copula copulans predicatum cum subiecto et illa copula est in intellectu quia est compositio vel divisio intellectus. Materialia vero in propositione sunt subiectum et predicatum. Dico ergo quod nulla propositio est composita ex rebus totaliter extra animam . . . Unde cum propositio sit triplex, quaedam in prolatione, quaedam in conceptu et quaedam significata per propositionem in conceptu que potest dici propositio in re, propositio primo modo dicta, scilicet propositio in prolatione, est totaliter extra animam . . . Propositio vero composita ex conceptibus est totaliter in intellectu. Et compositio composita ex rebus partim est in intellectu et partim extra intellectum. Quantum ad suum formale est in intellectu sed quantum ad materialia est totaliter extra intellectum."

[135] See Burley, *In Perih.*, cap. 1, fol. k4rb, text quoted above, note 131.

[136] See Burley's explanation of the formation of the *propositio in re* (then called an *ens copulatum*) on the model of Augustin's theory of visual perception (*De trinitate* XI, ii, 2), in his *In Cat.*, *prol.*, fol. c4rb–va: just as there is an *intentio sensus* coupling the sense of vision with a visible object, there is an *intentio intellectus*—the copula—coupling the intellect with extramental objects—subject and predicate—thus producing a complex intentional object, the *propositio in re*. For a detailed analysis of that passage, see Laurent Cesalli, "Le réalisme propositionnel de Walter Burley," *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age* 68 (2001), 165–221, at 200–07.

3.2.5. *Burley's Theory of Propositional Truth*

We opened this presentation of Burley's propositional semantics by mentioning three questions which do not apply to terms but must be addressed within a theory of the proposition.[137] Before answering them, we will consider a schematic representation of the essentials elements of Burley's propositional device and their relations:

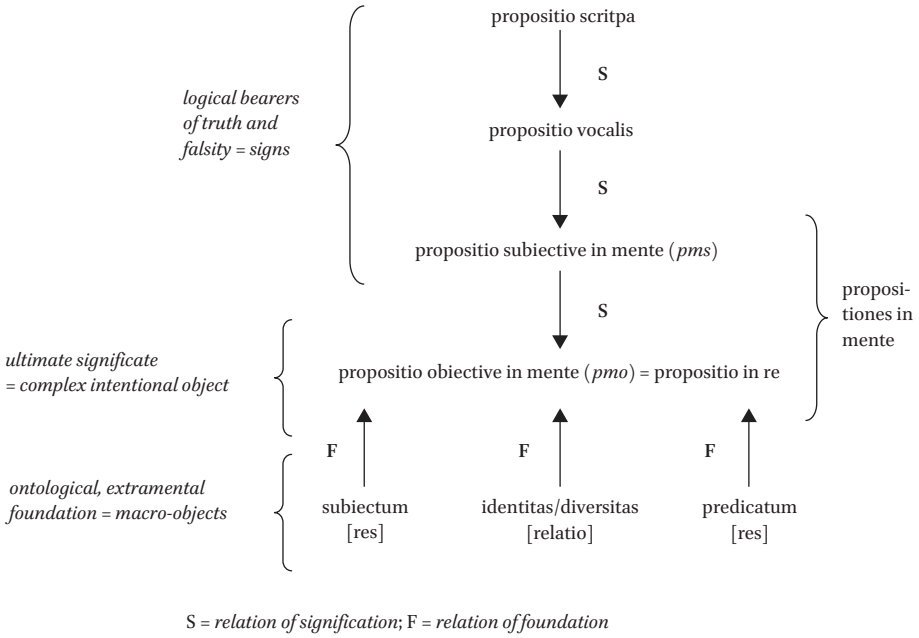



Figure 3.6: Burley's Theory of Propositional Truth

Let us now turn to the three questions raised initially: (1) What does it mean for a linguistic expression to be true or false? A linguistic expression (written, spoken, or mental) is true iff its ultimate significate is a truth objectively existing in the intellect, that is, a *propositio in re* (*pmo*); it is false if it does not have such an ultimate significate (there are only false *pms*, and no false *pmo*).[138] (2) What is it that makes a linguistic expression

[137] See above, section 3.

[138] See Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.27, 61–62: "Unde dico quod veritas quae est subiective in intellectu non est nisi quaedam adaequatio intellectus ad propositionem veram quae solum habet esse obiectivum in intellectu. Unde dico quod omnes propositiones quae habent esse subiectivum in intellectu humano possunt non

true or false? Immediately, it is its ultimate significate (*pmo*); ultimately, it is the ontological foundation of *pmo*, that is, the real extramental constellation of substances and accidents which is objectively recomposed in the mind as a *propositio in re* (*pmo*). (3) How are what a proposition signifies and what makes it true related? It is a relation of objective foundation: the terms of the *propositio in re* are not created by the intellect (they are not fictions); they are the presence in the mind of extramental objects (that substance, this accident) as cognitive and objective contents; by its intentional activity, the intellect selects these objects and the (always) mental copula combines them to a *propositio in re* (*pmo*).[139]

Thus Burley has a strict correspondentist theory of truth: true propositions are made true by truth-makers which are extramental real complexes. For example, if the proposition "*Socrates est albus*" is true, it is made true by the extramental complex (substance-Socrates + quality-whiteness + relation-identity).[140] Note that truth-makers are not equivalent to truth conditions: every philosopher will acknowledge that a proposition *p* is true iff *T*, where *T* are the truth-conditions of *p*. But it does not follow that *T* involves a specific correlate of *p*—one could say, for example, that the semantic correlates of the terms of *p* are sufficient, and that there is no need for a specific propositional correlate to explain the truth of *p*.[141]

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esse et etiam possunt non esse verae. Unde ista 'homo est animal' quae est propositio habens esse subiective in intellectu potest non esse, tamen ista ut solum habet esse obiectivum in intellectu non potest non esse nec non esse vera."

[139] For Burley's theory of truth in nonstandard cases (such as true propositions about past objects or even about impossible objects), see Cesalli, *Le réalisme propositionnel. Sémantique et ontologie*, 232–40 as well as Laurent Cesalli, "Intentionality and Truth-Making: Augustine's Influence on Burley and Wyclif's Propositional Semantics," *Vivarium* 45.2 (2007), 283–97.

[140] One can see here the difference between what ultimately makes the proposition "*Socrates est albus*" true and the significate of the expression "*Sor albus*" (see above, section 2.3.6.1, note 74). The significate of the latter expression is just white Socrates, while the singificate (and truth-maker) of the former includes a (real) relation of identity between Socrates and its whiteness.

[141] Contrary to Ockham, according to whom a proposition is true iff the subject and the predicate suppose for the same thing, Burley states that a proposition is true iff those things for which the predicate and the subject supposit are the same. Burley, *In Perih.*, cap. 1, fol. k4rb: "Dicendum est ut mihi videtur quod ad hoc quod aliquid sit verum oportet quod veritati propositionis in mente in prolatione et in scripto correspondeat identitas vel diversitas seu non identitas istorum pro quibus supponit subiectum et predicatum." In the earlier *De suppositionibus* (§ 4.1, 55–56), Burley expresses the conditions under which a proposition is true in terms of inherence: "Intelligendum est quod ad veritatem propositionis . . . sufficit et requiritur quod illud pro quo supponit praedicatum insit illi pro quo supponit subiectum. . . . Et ideo veritas propositionis affirmativae est magis iudicanda penes inhaerentiam istorum pro quibus extrema supponunt quam penes inhaerentiam

## 4. *Conclusion*

We addressed the question of meaning and truth in Burley according to a threefold perspective: the notion of logic and its objects, the semantics of terms, and the semantics of propositions. To conclude this survey, I will point out some remarkable features among the elements gathered in the preceding pages.

(1) Although the title of Burley's major logical work—the *De puritate artis logicae*—has been interpreted as expressing the will to give a metaphysically neutral exposition of logic,[142] it is clear that logic, as Burley conceives of it, is intimately related to metaphysics: his conception of the objects of logic as things of second intentions[143] is an unmistakable sign for that. Of course, this does not prevent Burley from developing a highly formal logic—as exemplified by his theory of consequences—but the very roots of logic remain, in a way, extralogical. This is also true of his conception of signification and supposition. (2) The semantics of names is not explained in purely epistemic terms: Burley does not think that a name like "*homo*" applies to many individuals because it is semantically related to a concept under which many individuals fall; on the contrary: "*homo*" applies to many individuals because each man has his or her *humanity* as a metaphysical part—which in turn explains why they fall under the same concept.[144] In that respect, the conception of simple supposition as a significative use of a name in a proposition is remarkable.[145] Furthermore, the constitutive link between logic and metaphysics is also manifest in the parallel between the theory of first and second intentions (absolute and compared concepts) and the division of simple supposition in absolute and compared simple supposition.[146] (3) Finally, Burley's conception of

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extremorum adinvicem." On the background of Burley's ontology of macro-objects, the difference between identity account and inherence account of truth tends to disappear: to be identical means here to be (different) parts of the same macro-object.

[142] See for example Kunze, in Walter Burley, *Von der Reinheit der Kunst der Logik*, xvii. Boehner, for his part, had made another hypothesis: the purity Burley is striving for is a logic freed from any nominalistic impurity (Burley, *De puritate artis logicae*, viii). The solution is delivered by Spade and Menn: Burley is alluding to the first lines of the Physics of Avicenna's *Al-Shifa*, where we find the expression "*de doctrina puritatis logicae*", where "*puritas*" means something like "the core"—see Paul Vincent Spade and Stephen Menn, "A Note on the Title of Walter Burley's *On the Purity of the Art of Logic*," published online at http://www.pvspade.com/Logic/docs/BurlNote.pdf.

[143] See above, section 1.2.

[144] See above, section 2.1.

[145] See above, section 2.3.6.1.

[146] See above, section 2.3.6.2.

truth as directional adequation—*adaequatio X ad Y* and not *adaequatio X et Y*—allows for a clear articulation of ontological and logical truth.[147] Burley's theory of propositional truth is clearly the expression of that fundamental articulation. Its kernel is the distinction between two types of mental propositions, one existing subjectively in the intellect, the other, also called *propositio in re*, being only objectively in the intellect.[148] This distinction is Burley's answer to the problem of propositional truth: things themselves cannot be present in the mind, but a theory of philosophical truth requires an objective relation between the mind and the external world. The *propositio in re*—which can be equally characterized as objective cognitive content[149] or complex intentional object[150]—is the pivotal entity of Burley's propositional device. The clause "*in re*", paradoxically applied to a mental entity (*pmo*), has the heuristic function to express the foundation of logical in ontological truth.

[147] Respectively, types 1 and 4 in the schema, Figure 3.5 in section 3.1 above.

[148] Respectively the *propositio haben esse subiective in intellectu* (= *pms*) and the *propositio habens esse obiective in intellectu* (= *pmo*). See above, section 3.2.2.

[149] A *propositio in re* is in the mind but does not belong to any particular mind in the sense in which *pms* does—see above, section 3.2.3.

[150] A *propositio in re* is the reproduction in the mind of extramental macro-objects—see above, section 3.2.4.

CHAPTER FOUR

# BEING AND ANALOGY

E. Jennifer Ashworth

Burley's discussion of being (*ens*) and analogy is notable for his thesis that the word "being" corresponds to a single analogical concept.[1] Moreover, he was part of a movement, begun in the later 13th century, which explicitly opposed semantic analogy, a doctrine of language, to metaphysical analogy, the doctrine that just as creatures are beings analogically through their relationship to God, the first cause, whose very essence is being, so accidents are beings analogically through their relationship to the substance, a being per se, on which they depend. Obviously, what is new here is not the doctrine itself, but the fact that the relations between God and creatures, substance and accident, were described as analogical. Unlike John Duns Scotus, who insisted that no single word could express a real relation between things ordered in accordance with priority and posteriority, and that no single concept could capture such a relation, Burley retained the link between semantic analogy and metaphysical analogy, for he believed that our words and our concepts can mirror the world. On the other hand, he broke the link between semantics and ontology for other terms traditionally regarded as analogical, such as "healthy", by construing these as metaphorical in their secondary senses.

In what follows I shall begin by surveying the sources in which Burley's views are expressed. I shall then consider some basic notions in the medieval theory of language, including analogy, but also signification, imposition, and metaphor. Next I shall discuss the standard divisions of equivocation and how these related to both analogy and metaphor in Burley's writings. Finally, I will discuss how Burley deals with *ens*, first from the point of view of semantics, and then from the point of view of metaphysics.

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[1] For a full discussion of analogy, and for bibliography, see E. Jennifer Ashworth, *Les théories de l'analogie du XII^e^ au XVI^e^ siècle* (Paris: 2008). I would like to thank Angel D'Ors for his helpful comments on an earlier version of this chapter.

## *Sources*

I begin, then, by considering the available sources. Unsurprisingly, Burley never produced a single treatise dealing with being and analogy, so the relevant material has to be drawn from his surviving authentic works. These do not include commentaries on either Peter Lombard's *Sentences* or Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, and so the main sources are Burley's commentaries and questions on Aristotle's *Categories*, *Sophistici elenchi*, and *Physics*. For the *Categories*, there are three commentaries, two of which date from the Oxford period, and one of which is part of the *Ars vetus* commentary written before 1337.[2] The earliest commentary, the *Expositio vetus*, is very brief and contains little of interest for our purposes. So far as the *Sophistici elenchi* is concerned, we have only one set of questions dating from Burley's Oxford period.[3] For the *Physics*, we have the early *Expositio cum quaestionibus super Physicam* and the later *Quaestiones super Physicam*, both of which probably date from the Oxford period, and each of which contains a version of the question "Whether *ens* is univocal or equivocal to the ten categories."[4] The final *In Physicam Aristotelis* dates from between 1324 and 1337.[5] I shall also draw some material from two

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[2] For the *Expositio vetus*, see Mischa von Perger, "Walter Burley's *Expositio vetus super librum Praedicamentorum*. An Edition," *Franciscan Studies* 61 (2003), 55–96, to be cited as *In Cat.* 1. Alessandro Conti has kindly provided me with a copy of his unpublished edition of the middle commentary, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, to be cited as *In Cat.* 2 with references to Peterhouse, Cambridge, 184, fols. 171r–189v. For the final commentary, the *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, see Walter Burley, *Expositio super Artem Veterem Porphyrii et Aristotelis* (Venice: 1497; repr. Frankfurt am Main: 1967), to be cited as *In Cat.* 3.

[3] Sten Ebbesen, "Gualterus Burleus, *Quaestiones super Sophisticos Elenchos 4–12*. A Revised Edition," *Cahiers de l'institut du moyen-âge grec et latin* 76 (2005), 239–82, to be cited as *In SE*.

[4] For the first, to be cited as *In Phys.* 1, see Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, 448/409, 192a–194a ("Utrum ens sit equivocum ad decem predicamenta"). For the second, to be cited as *In Phys.* 2, see Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, 512/543, fols. 113va–116va, and Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, F V 12, fols. 115va–119rb ("Utrum ens sit univocum ad decem predicamenta"). In my edited extracts from these manuscripts, I shall use the Gonville and Caius manuscript as my basic text, and cite only significant variants from the Basel manuscript. I am very grateful to Dr. Silvia Donati for sharing with me her transcription of Gonville and Caius, 512/543.

[5] Walter Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis Expositio et Quaestiones* (Venice: 1501; repr. Hildesheim: 1972), to be cited as *In Phys.* 3. For discussion of Burley's *Physics* commentaries, see Edith Dudley Sylla, "Walter Burley's Practice as a Commentator on Aristotle's *Physics*," *Medioevo* 27 (2002), 301–71; Wood, "Walter Burley's *Physics* Commentaries," *Franciscan Studies* 44 (1984), 275–327; and Chapter One above, 42–43. Sylla, 305, notes that *In Phys.* 3 contains only one *quaestio*. For general discussion, see Silvia Donati, "La discussione sull'unità del concetto di ente nella tradizione di commento della 'Fisica': commenti parigini

early works, his *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*,[6] and *Super tractatum fallaciarum*,[7] and from the much later *De puritate artis logicae*.[8] In addition, I shall make some reference to two commentaries on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, the *Expositio vetus*,[9] and the *Liber universalium* that formed part of the *Ars vetus* written before 1337.[10]

These sources cover Burley's working life, though most of them seem to have been produced during the Oxford period up to 1307. We will find that the doctrines are consistent, though the language used to present them is rather variable. There are, of course, also different approaches, as the issue discussed varies with context. In the *Physics* commentaries the emphasis is on *ens*, and the theory of analogy or some approximation is employed to deal with the problem of whether the word "*ens*" is said equivocally or univocally of the ten categories. In the logical texts, the focus is on words such as "healthy" and "man" in the context "painted man" (*homo pictus*), for these words are used in an extended sense which brings into play the relationships between analogy, equivocation, and metaphor. The only issue that is lacking, owing to the absence of a *Sentences* commentary, is that of divine language.

## *Theory of Language*

It is appropriate to begin with the medieval sense of analogy as it applied to words said according to priority and posteriority. This new sense, which was opposed to the Greek sense of an equality between two proportions,[11] had its roots in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and in Arabic sources, all of which were copiously cited by Burley in his two sets of questions on the *Physics*. In *Metaphysics* 4.2 (1003a33–35) Aristotle wrote: "The word 'being' is

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degli anni 1270–1315 ca.," in *Die Logik des Transzendentalen. Festschrift für Jan A. Aertsen zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. M. Pickavé, Miscellanea Mediaevalia 30 (Berlin: 2003), 60–139.

[6] Stephen F. Brown, "Walter Burley's *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*," *Franciscan Studies* 34 (1974), 200–95, to be cited as *In Periherm*.

[7] Sten Ebbesen, "Burley on Equivocation in his Companion to a *Tractatus Fallaciarum* and in his Questions on the *Elenchi*," *Cahiers de l'institut du moyen-âge grec et latin* 74 (2003), 151–207, to be cited as *In Fallac*.

[8] Walter Burleigh, *De Puritate Artis Logicae Tractatus Longior With a Revised Edition of the Tractatus Brevior*, ed. Philotheus Boehner (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: 1955).

[9] Mischa von Perger, "Walter Burley's *Expositio Vetus Super Librum Porphyrii*: An Edition," *Franciscan Studies* 59 (2001), 237–69, to be cited as *In Porph.* 1.

[10] In *Burlei super artem veterem,* to be cited as *In Porphy.* 2.

[11] For further discussion of Greek analogy in medieval logic, see Ashworth, *Les théories*, 44–54.

said in many ways, but in relation to one (*ad unum*) and to one nature, and not by equivocation but rather as 'salubrious' in relation to health."[12] Similarly, in *Physics* 1.2 (185a22) he wrote: "For what is, is said in many ways."[13] Among the logicians of the Arab world, there was a long tradition of ambiguous words which were intermediary between univocals and equivocals and which were said in a prior and a posterior sense (*per prius et posterius*).[14] This tradition was transmitted to the Latin world by the *Logic* of Al-Ghazâlî (Algazel),[15] and by his *Metaphysics*.[16] Here he argues that *esse* is said neither equivocally nor univocally of the ten categories, and he notes that for a name to be univocal, it must agree with its referents "sine differencia potencie, et debilitatis, et sine prius et posterius". He explains that priority and posteriority come into the picture because *esse* first belongs to substance, then to quality and quantity by virtue of substance, and finally to the other categories by virtue of quantity and quality. It is because the ten categories agree in *esse* in one way and disagree in another that we are dealing with a medium between univocals and equivocals, and hence with a *nomen ambiguum*. Equally important was the *Metaphysics* of Avicenna, who said that *ens* was neither a genus nor a predicate predicated equally of all its subordinates, but an intention in which they agreed according to a prior and a posterior sense.[17] To this idea of being said in a prior and a posterior sense, logicians added

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[12] *Aristoteles Latinus XXV 2: Metaphysica Lib. I–X, XII–XIV. Translatio Anonyma sive "Media"*, ed. G. Vuillemin-Diem (Leiden: 1976), 60: "Ens autem multis quidem dicitur modis, sed ad unum et unam aliquam naturam et non equivoce, sed quemadmodum salubre omne ad sanitatem . . ."

[13] *Aristoteles Latinus VII.1 Fasciculus Secundus. Physica: Translatio Vetus*, ed. Fernand Bossier and Jozef Brams (Leiden: 1990), 10, lines 9–10: "quoniam multipliciter dicitur quod est".

[14] H.A. Wolfson, "The Amphibolous Terms in Aristotle, Arabic Philosophy and Maimonides," *Harvard Theological Review* 31 (1938), 151–73; repr. in Wolfson, *Studies in the History of Philosophy and Religion*, ed. I. Twersky and G.H. Williams, vol. 1 (Cambridge, Mass.: 1973), 455–77.

[15] C.H. Lohr, "*Logica Algazelis*: Introduction and Critical Text," *Traditio* 21 (1965), 246: "*Convenientia* sunt media inter univoca et aequivoca, ut 'ens,' quod dicitur de substantia et accidente. . . . Esse vero prius habet substantia; deinde accidens, mediante alio. Ergo est eis esse secundum prius et posterius. Hoc dicitur *ambiguum*, eo quod aptatur ad hoc et ad hoc."

[16] J.T. Muckle (ed.), *Algazel's Metaphysics. A Mediaeval Translation* (Toronto: 1933), 25–26. Burley quotes the passage at length in *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 114va–vb, B F V 12, fol. 117ra–rb. There is a briefer reference in *In Phys.* 3, fol. 13ra.

[17] Avicenna, *Liber de Philosophia Prima, sive Scientia Divina I–IV: Édition critique de la traduction latine médiévale*, ed. S. Van Riet (Louvain: 1977), I. 5, 40: "Dicemus igitur nunc quod quamvis ens, sicut scisti, non sit genus nec praedicatum aequaliter de his quae sub eo sunt, tamen est intentio in qua conveniunt secundum prius et posterius. . . ."

Averroes's notion of the attribution of one thing to another,[18] which served as a metaphysical foundation for signifying in a prior and a posterior sense. It seems that it was in the 1220s that people began to call ambiguous words analogical, and a little later, logicians and theologians began to use the word "*analogia*" for deliberate equivocation.[19] This new theory of analogy posed various problems for the theory of language. First, there is the problem of imposition: are there two linked acts, or is there a single act for the first sense, which is then extended by virtue of usage, or is there a single act which encompasses both senses? This last possibility raises the problem of concepts. If an analogical term corresponds to one concept by one act of imposition, is this concept simple or is it a complex concept formed by some aggregate or disjunction of subsidiary concepts? Can a simple concept include priority and posteriority,[20] and can it include conditions for use, such as the condition that the word will need to be distinguished in one context but not in another?[21]

To understand these problems, we must look at the main elements of the theory of language prevalent in the mid-13th century and how these relate to Burley. The first thing to note is that in their discussion of signification, logicians focused on single categorematic terms, those which can serve as subject or predicate in propositions. Complex terms, phrases, and propositions are posterior to simple terms, and by virtue of the principle of compositionality, the sense of a phrase is a function of the sense of its parts. Nor can these parts lose their senses in order to be merged into a new sense. As we shall see, this approach downplayed the importance of context and speaker meaning.

Leaving aside the problems posed by fictional terms, negative and privative terms, and concrete accidental terms or adjectives, every strictly univocal categorical term was taken to belong to a category, and to be either a genus, a species, a difference, an accident, or a property (in the technical sense).[22] This immediately raised the problem of how to classify the

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[18] Averroes, *Aristotelis Opera cum Averrois Commentariis* (Venice: 1562–74; repr. Frankfurt: 1962), 8, fol. 65rb: "nomen 'ens' dicitur multis modis, et non aequiuoce, sicut canis, qui dicitur de latrabili et marino; neque uniuoce, ut animal de homine, et asino; sed est de nominibus quae dicuntur de rebus at<t>ributis eidem, et sunt media inter uniuoca et aequiuoca. . . ."

[19] Ashworth, *Les théories*, 30–31.

[20] For the problem of analogical concepts, see E.J. Ashworth, "Analogical Concepts: The Fourteenth-Century Background to Cajetan," *Dialogue* 31 (1992), 399–413.

[21] For discussion, see Ashworth, *Les théories*, 87–88.

[22] See e.g. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, I, 32. See Donati, "La discussione," 83–84, on the discussion of this issue in Parisian commentaries between 1270 and 1315.

transcendental terms, including *ens* but also *verum*, *bonum*, and *unum*. We use these terms of everything that exists, and so they are terms that transcend the categories. How then can they signify univocally if univocal signification is linked to the five predicables? *Ens* is neither a genus nor a species, but it cannot be a difference, an accident, or a property. In his *Ordinatio* I, d.3, pars 1, q.1, John Duns Scotus solved this problem by defining a univocal concept in minimal terms, as one that was sufficient for contradiction,[23] and Burley too broke the link between univocity and the predicables. In his *Quaestiones super Physicam* he argued that this classification of predicates (from which he omitted "species") applied only to those predicates about which questions could be asked, though he did add that, alternatively, *ens* might be reduced to genus.[24] He went on to deny that *ens* could be predicated *in quid*, so it could certainly not be taken to be a genus in the normal sense.

Terms signify, which meant for Burley that they represent things under their proper *rationes*.[25] This reference to things and *rationes* raises the issue of whether words primarily signify concepts or things. Certainly logicians held that spoken terms signify things through their relation to concepts, which are naturally significative and which, from the second half of the 13th century, were themselves regarded as representative signs. However, there were various further issues lurking here, such as whether to distinguish between intelligible species and concepts, and, for 14th-century nominalists, whether the things in question were common natures or individuals. For Lambert of Auxerre (or Lagny) the primary significate of a categorematic term was an intelligible species and its secondary significate was a common nature.[26] For others the primary significate was not an intelligible species but a concept, Aquinas's inner word, and for yet others, the primary significate was the common nature itself, whether this was

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[23] John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I, d. 3 in *Opera Omnia*, vol. 3 (Vatican City: 1954), 18.

[24] *In Phys. 2*, GC 512/543, fol. 115 vb, B F V 12, fol. 118va: "Ad aliud, dico quod non sequitur quod ens sit aliquod quatuor predicatorum, quia illa divisio predicatorum in *Topicis* non est nisi [*add.* B] de predicatis queribilibus et dubitabilibus. Huiusmodi non est ens, quia secundum Avicennam omnes homines imaginantur certitudinem entis. Vel aliter dico quod ens potest reduci ad predicatum de genere."

[25] *In SE*, 245: "Ad aliud potest dici quod significare aliquid nihil a<liu>d est quam illud su\b/ propria ratione repraesentare."

[26] Lambert of Auxerre [or of Lagny], *Logica* (*Summa Lamberti*), ed. Franco Alessio (Florence: 1971), 205–06.

identified with the content of a universal concept, or was ontologically separate from the concept and its external referents, the individuals.[27]

The basic lines of Burley's position are reasonably clear. He was a realist with respect to common natures, and he also held that there was some kind of mental intermediary. In his *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias* he asked whether an utterance (*vox*) signified a thing (*res*) or a *passio*, and he replied that the word "*passio*" should be taken for the thing as it affects the intellect.[28] He went on to argue that just as in the act of understanding, one should consider three elements, the thing understood, the intellect that understands, and the <intelligible> species through which the thing is understood, so in the act of signifying three things should be considered, the signifying utterance, the thing signified, and the <intelligible> species of the thing through which the thing is signified. This last is not what is primarily understood or signified.[29] He also makes it quite clear in a number of places that the thing signified is a common thing, rather than an individual.[30] In his *Quaestiones super Physicam*, he says explicitly that to every common concept there corresponds a common thing.[31] Later we shall see how he construed this claim in relation to *ens*.

At this point, we need to consider the significate (*significatum*) and the thing signified (*res significata*). A signifying term has a significate and in one sense this is distinct from the thing signified in its status as an independent thing with its own existence in individuals, but in another

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[27] See Giorgio Pini, "Species, Concept, and Thing: Theories of Signification in the Second Half of the Thirteenth Century," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 8 (1999), 21–52; and Pini, "Signification of Names in Duns Scotus and Some of His Contemporaries," *Vivarium* 39 (2001), 20–51.

[28] *In Periherm*., 212: "Tertio modo sumitur passio pro ipsa re ut nata est movere intellectum, et sic sumendo passionem voces significant passiones, quia nihil aliud est significare passionem isto modo quam significare rem ut est proportionata intellectui. Et isto modo quaelibet vox significat passionem." In the *Ars vetus* commentary on the *Perihermeneias*, Burley writes (sig. k 3va) that *passio* "accipitur pro dispositione intellectus, scilicet pro similitudine rei in intellectu representante rem extra animam."

[29] *In Periherm*., 212: "Sed in actu intelligendi est considerare tria, scilicet rem intellectam et ipsum intellectum intelligentem, et speciem mediante qua res intelligitur, sic quod illa species non est illud quod primo intelligitur sed res primo intelligitur mediante specie. Sic in actu significandi est reperire tria: vocem significantem, rem significatam et speciem rei mediante qua res significatur. Et sicut species non est illud quod primo intelligitur sic species non est illud quod primo significatur sed res mediante specie." The context of Burley's discussion (cf. 208) supports my reading of "species" as "intelligible species". In the *Ars vetus* commentary (sig. k 3va), the third element is described as "similitudo rei in anima".

[30] *In Periherm*., 215; *In SE*, 257: "… 'homo' enim significat naturam humanam, et per consequens ipsam repraesentat, sed non Socratem et Platonem significat sed ista appellat.…" See also *De puritate*, 8: "… hoc nomen 'homo' non significat primo aliquod singulare; ergo significat primo commune.…"

[31] *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 116rb–va, B F V 12, fol. 119rb: "Si ergo conceptus sit communis, ergo illud cuius est ille conceptus erit commune."

sense the significate just is the thing signified, the thing qua understood by the thinker as it is related to its appellata or contents.[32] Similarly, when the significate is described as a concept, the concept has to be taken not as an intelligible species, but as the thing as conceived. Indeed, in the *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias* he claims that this is precisely what Priscian meant by concept.[33] In the *Super tractatum fallaciarum*, he says that "'ens' signifies (*importat*) one concept which is found in (*reperitur*) substance before accident".[34] In his last commentary on the *Categories* he writes that if *ens* has one concept agreeing with the ten categories, then it must be univocal, although that concept agrees with several things according to priority and posteriority.[35] On the other hand, in his *Quaestiones super Physicam*, he is concerned to argue that no *conceptus mentis* as such is the first object of the intellect, or the first subject of metaphysics.[36] What lies behind these passages is the belief that while words, concepts, and common natures are ontologically distinct, there is a tight connection between the structures of language, concepts, and reality, especially of the latter two, and what is important about significates and concepts is their applicability to things. This is one of the points that separates Burley from Duns Scotus, who was concerned to argue that the concept of being could not capture the metaphysical structure of being.

Logicians saw human language as conventional (*ad placitum*). They believed that spoken terms receive their signification through an original institution, usually called imposition, and, for most logicians, terms received their signification only once. Modist logicians in particular were reluctant to accept that the original imposition could be modified by context, or linked to some subsequent imposition. In contrast to the *modistae*,

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[32] *In Phys.* 1, 193a: "Alia est univocatio significatorum ad appellativa, et tale univocum est omnis terminus univocus cuius significatum equaliter(?) competit suis contentis ita quod non per prius uni contento quam reliquo." *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 114va, B F V 12, fol. 117ra: "Quod illud sit univocum purum ubi est univocatio vocis ad significatum et similiter significati respectu contentorum non est dubium. . . . Ex hoc patet quod ad talem univocationem non sufficit unitas significati, sed oportet quod significatum conveniat suis appellatis eodem modo."

[33] *In Periherm.*, 217: "Quod per conceptum Priscianus intelligit rem ut concipitur, et idem intelligit Philosophus per passionem cum dicit 'Voces sunt notae passionum'."

[34] *In Fallac.*, 202: ". . . ens importat unum conceptum qui prius reperitur in substantia quam in accidente."

[35] *In Cat.* 3, sig. c5ra: "et sic si ens habet unum conceptum convenientem decem predicamentis, tunc est univocum, quamvis ille conceptus conveniat pluribus secundum prius et posterius."

[36] *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 116rb, B F V 12, fol. 119rb. "Nullus conceptus mentis est primum obiectum intellectus, nec primum subiectum metaphysice."

Roger Bacon held that the imposition of a term was constantly renewed, because a term could signify only what was presently existent, and Burley echoes the second part of Bacon's position in his *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias* where he argues that "man" said of past or future men is used analogically, because it acquired its signification through attribution to present men.[37]

The more rigid view of imposition immediately raised the problem of whether sentences containing equivocal terms could be disambiguated by making a distinction between the various senses of these terms, and Burley took up this problem in questions nine and ten of his *Quaestiones super Sophisticos Elenchos*.[38] He adopted the standard approach whereby a term could be either in a proposition with a mediate adjunct (such as "runs" in "The dog runs", where there is a separation between the subject and the predicate or mediate adjunct), or in a proposition with an immediate adjunct (such as "barking" in "The barking dog runs", where "barking" is part of the subject). Although some authors held that the second type of sentence did not need to be distinguished,[39] Burley, like Scotus and others before him, held that a term could not lose its signification no matter what its propositional context, and so, if "dog" is ambiguous between the barking animal, the constellation, and the marine creature, both types of sentence will have to be distinguished accordingly. Like Scotus, Burley did admit that adjuncts such as "the grammarian" or "the musician" added to a proper name may play a pragmatic role in showing the hearer how the speaker intends the sentence to be taken, but this is not a matter of signification, for all the possible *significata* are equally represented in each case.[40] Similarly, a speaker may use an adjunct to bring it about that one

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[37] *In Periherm.*, 290–91: "Circa istam positionem sciendum quod terminus communis significans rem per se in genere non praedicatur univoce de suppositis praesentibus, praeteritis et futuris, sed analogice, quoniam si iste terminus 'homo' esset univocus ad Ioannem et Caesarem, essentia hominis salvaretur in Ioanne et etiam in Caesare. Sed hoc est falsum. . . . Supposita igitur praeterita et futura habent attributionem ad supposita praesentia, et ideo terminus non dicitur univoce de praesentibus, praeteritis et futuris. . . . Unde tales termini sunt analogi: Per prius enim conveniunt praesentibus suppositis quam suppositis praeteritis vel futuris, quia non conveniunt praeteritis et futuris nisi per attributionem ad praesentia."

[38] *In SE*, 263–75. For some discussion of the issues, see Ashworth, *Les théories*, 80–88. Unfortunately, p. 81 is inaccurate with respect to the status of "canis currit".

[39] See Ashworth, *Les théories*, 86–88.

[40] In *In SE*, in reply to p. 268 on the effects of adding "Grammaticus" or "Musicus" to "Robertus", he writes, on p. 274 ". . . quantum est de virtute sermonis audiens non magis percipit unum significatum quam alterum, quia ut sic omnia aequaliter repraesentatur; sed tamen, cum audiens percipit illud cognomen convenire uni significato et non alteri,

significate is grasped more rapidly than another, but again, this is not a matter of signification.[41]

It seems that we are not going to solve problems of equivocation and analogy by appealing to the different propositional contexts in which a term appears, or to the speaker's intentions, or to the hearer's understanding. We have to focus on the single utterance and the significates associated with it. However, while straightforwardly equivocal terms were the result of more than one act of imposition, the acts being completely unrelated, some terms did receive an extended or secondary sense through usage. As a result, the situation was somewhat different for tokens of the same term-type which seem to have related senses, whether one calls the term-type a deliberate equivocal, analogical, or metaphorical. In his *Super tractatum fallaciarum*, Burley cites the oft-quoted principle: "an unmodified analogical term (*per se dictum*) is taken in the best-known sense (*pro modo famosiori*)".[42] In *De puritate artis logicae* he explains that if the term is modified in accordance with its secondary sense, it is equivocal according to the second mode of equivocation.[43] Hence we would not have to disambiguate "man" and "runs" in the sentence "A man runs", but in the sentences "I saw a painted man" and "The river runs" we would have (in theory) to make a distinction in order to discover the sense in which such a claim might be true.[44] He is less explicit about this in his middle commentary on the *Categories*, but even there the same point is made in relation to *animal pictus*. He claims that we cannot argue from "An animal is

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ex hoc iudicat proferentem sermonem aliud significatum intellexisse, et ista convenientia rei est causa et non significatio sermonis". Cf. John Duns Scotus, *Opera Philosophica I. Quaestiones in Librum Porphyrii Isagoge et Quaestiones super Praedicamenta Aristotelis*, ed. R. Andrews et al. (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: 1999), *In Cat*., q. 4, 286 and John Duns Scotus, *Opera Philosophica II. Quaestiones in Libros Perihermenias Aristotelis; Quaestiones Super Librum Elenchorum Aristotelis; Theoremata*, ed. R. Andrews et al. (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: 2004), *In SE*, qq. 12–13, 324.

[41] *In SE*, 261: "... licet de vi vocis non possit distinguens uti voce aequivoca pro uno significato ita quod non pro alio, tamen per aliquam determinationem uni significato <additam> potest facere quod vox aequivoca citius apprehenderetur pro uno significato quam alio, licet de vi vocis quodlibet significatum actu repraesentetur...."

[42] *In Fallac*., 202. See also *In Phys.* 2, 193a.

[43] *De puritate*, 10: "... analogum per se positum non comparatum alicui participanti sibi pro secundario significato stat pro modo famosiori ... terminus analogus comparatus alicui participanti sibi pro significato secundario est aequivocus penes secundum modum aequivocationis...."

[44] See also Anonymus (SE 83) in Sten Ebbesen, "Texts on Equivocation. Part II. Ca. 1250–1310," *Cahiers de l'institut du moyen-âge grec et latin* 68 (1998), 290. I indicate the number of the commentary given in the list established by the author in Sten Ebbesen, "Medieval Latin Glosses and Commentaries on Aristotelian Logic Texts of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries," in *Glosses and Commentaries on Aristotelian Logical Texts: The Syriac, Arabic and Medieval Latin Traditions*, ed. Charles Burnett (London: 1993), 148–73.

painted" to "What is painted is an animate sensible substance" because this is a case of *transumptio*, and while usage allows us to grant the antecedent, just as it allows us to say "The river runs", it does not allow us to grant the consequent, which is false according to the strict sense of the words (*de virtute sermonis*).[45]

It is now necessary to say more about the notion of metaphor and other figures of speech. Here we must make certain distinctions in relation to the vocabulary. Sometimes the word "*metaphora*" was used in medieval Latin, but the more common words are "*translatio*" and "*transumptio*", which were often treated as synonymous, but which were used in a variety of ways.[46] Sometimes they refer to metaphor in particular, and sometimes to any figure of speech. In *De puritate artis logicae*, Burley explains that supposition is improper when a term supposits because of *transumptio* or of usage (*ex transsumptione vel ex usu loquendi*), and he goes on to cite antonomasis, synecdoche, and metonomy as producing improper supposition.[47] There are three points to emphasize about *translatio*. First, the use of words is said to be proper when the word is used in accordance with the sense received by imposition, and all other uses are by definition improper, even if they are both useful and legitimate. Secondly, some logicians such as William of Ockham insisted that a second act of imposition, related to the first, was required to produce a metaphor,[48] but the most usual view insisted on just one initial act of imposition which had nothing to do with the later transfer of sense. Indeed, Burley argued that two senses could not be linked by two acts of imposition. Each such act had to be totally arbitrary (*ad placitum totaliter*), but when one transfers a word, there is always a reason, which is the presence of a similarity of relations. We call the bottom of a bridge the foot because the bottom of a bridge supports the bridge just as the foot of a man supports the man. Only usage, and not imposition, explains the transfer of sense. As Burley wrote:

> We should say that it is possible for an utterance to signify two things, one primarily (*per prius*) and the other secondarily (*per posterius*). But if it signifies several things by imposition, it will signify them equally primarily, because when an utterance is imposed on one thing it is not imposed by virtue of a

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[45] *In Cat.* 2, P 184, fol. 172va.

[46] See E.J. Ashworth, "Metaphor and the Logicians from Aristotle to Cajetan," *Vivarium* 45 (2007), 311–27.

[47] Burley, *De puritate*, 2, 46–7.

[48] William of Ockham, *Expositio super libros Elenchorum*, ed. F. del Punta, *Opera Philosophica*, vol. 3 (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: 1979), 22.

> relationship <that thing has> to another, but whatever it signifies by imposition, it signifies as if nothing else is signified by that utterance. However, it is possible for an utterance to signify two things in accordance with priority and posteriority, one by imposition, the other by transference (*ex transumptione*). By virtue of the fact that there is a similitude between two things, the utterance which is imposed on one is transferred to the other. Thus because the beam (*lignum*) of a bridge supports the bridge just as the foot of an animal supports the animal, and because the word "foot" is imposed to signify the foot of an animal, the word "foot" is transferred to signify the beam of the bridge. But this is not by imposition, since imposition is totally voluntary, and the intellect is led by some reasoning to make "foot" signify such a beam or to be taken for it, and so it is not <a case of> imposition but of transference.[49]

### *Equivocation, Analogy, and Metaphor*

In order to place Burley's discussions of equivocation in their proper context, we must begin by considering the texts and doctrines which he had inherited. We have already looked at the key texts on analogy, but now we must look at doctrines of equivocation, and see how the types of equivocation related to analogy and metaphor. The starting point was provided by Aristotle's *Categories* 1a1–3, which opens with a definition of equivocal, univocal, and denominative terms, though I shall ignore the last of these. Following Boethius's translation, the first two are defined in this way:[50] "Those that have only a name in common but a different *substantiae ratio* in accordance with that name are said to be equivocals, e.g., 'animal'

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[49] *In Fallac.*, 201–02. "Dicendum quod possibile est vocem significare duo, unum per prius, reliquum per posterius. Sed si aliqua significet ex impositione, significabit illa aeque primo, quia vox imposita uni rei ei imponitur non per habitudinem ad aliud, sed quicquid significatur ex impositione sic significatur ac si nihil aliud per illam vocem significaretur. Possibile est tamen quod vox significet duo secundum prius et posterius, unum ex impositione, reliquum ex transumptione. Ex hoc enim quod est aliqua similitudo inter duas res, vox quae imponitur uni transfertur ad aliud, ut quia sicut pes animalis substat animali, sic lignum substat ponti, et hoc nomen 'pes' imponitur ad significandum pedem animalis, transumitur tamen hoc nomen 'pes' ad significandum lignum substans ponti. Sed hoc non est ex impositione, quia imponitur totaliter ad placitum; modo quod 'pes' significet tale lignum vel pro tali accipiatur, ad hoc intellectus quodammodo ratione ducitur, et ideo non est impositio sed transumptio." All translations are my own. Similar remarks were made by his contemporary Thomas de Wyk in Ebbesen, "Texts on Equivocation," 142–43.

[50] Aristotle, *Categories* 1a1–15 in *Aristoteles Latinus I 1–5. Categoriae vel Praedicamenta*, ed. L. Minio-Paluello (Leiden: 1961), 5: "Aequivoca dicuntur quorum nomen solum commune est, secundum nomen vero substantiae ratio diversa, ut animal homo et quod pingitur. . . . Univoca vero dicuntur quorum et nomen commune est et secundum nomen eadem substantiae ratio, ut animal homo atque bos."

<in relation to> man and what is painted. . . . Those that have both a name in common and the same *substantiae ratio* in accordance with that name are said to be univocals, e.g., 'animal' <in relation to> man, ox." For Aristotle, equivocals were things in the world, but obviously a thing is equivocal if and only if it is named by an equivocal term. As a result, logicians focused not on terms in relation to other terms in a linguistic context but on terms in relation to things. Burley, like other logicians, followed Boethius's commentary in adding some comments about Aristotle's reason for placing the definition of equivocal terms first. This was, Burley said, because transcendental terms such as "*ens*" are widest of all in their scope, applying to members of all categories, and are predicated *equivoce seu analogice*, whereas univocal terms must belong to things in a single category.[51] The implication of this remark is, of course, that "*ens*" is an equivocal term. Burley also commented on the meaning of *ratio substantie*. In his first commentary, he said that the *ratio substantiae* was a definition;[52] in the middle commentary he said that "*ratio*" was taken for a description, and "*substantie*" for any essence.[53] In the last commentary, he explained that the *ratio substantiae* may be a definition, in which case it applies only to univocal terms (though not to all, since "definition" does not have a definition), or it may be taken more generally for any concept, in which case it also applies to analogical terms.[54] In his *Quaestiones super Physicam*, he remarked that the *ratio substantialis* is the *significatum*,[55] and in his *In Physica Aristotelis*, he called it a *conceptus essentialis*.[56]

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[51] *In Cat.* 3, sig. 4va–vb: "Sciendum est quod philosophus in hoc libro determinat de equivocis, denominativis et univocis, quoniam res predicamentales possunt comparari ad tria, scilicet ad ens transcendens quod est superius ad predicamentum, et ad rem eiusdem predicamenti, et ad rem alterius predicamenti. Illud quod est superius ad predicamenta predicatur de illis equivoce seu analogice, et res unius predicamenti de re eiusdem predicamenti predicatur univoce, et res unius predicamenti de re alterius predicamenti predicatur denominative." See *In Cat.* 2, P 184, fol. 172ra, for similar remarks. Here he uses the phrase "equivoce vel analogice".

[52] *In Cat.* 1, 62.

[53] *In Cat.* 2, P 184, fol. 172rb, "'Ratio' . . . accipitur pro descriptione . . . 'substantie' . . . accipitur indifferenter pro quacumque essentia."

[54] *In Cat.* 3, sig. c5ra: "Si autem per rationem intelligamus quemcumque conceptum, sicut quidam exponunt, tunc non accipitur ratio pro diffinitione tantum sed generalius, et tunc diffinitio seu descriptio univocorum est communis tam puris univocis quam etiam analogis."

[55] *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 114va, B F V 12, fol. 117ra. In an argument that univocals are of two types, he writes: "univoca sunt quorum nomen commune et ratio substantialis eadem, quia in utroque modo univoci invenitur [*om.* GC] una ratio substantialis, id est unum significatum".

[56] *In Phys.* 3, fol. 12vb.

In his commentary on the *Categories*, Boethius had proposed a classification of equivocals.[57] In conformity with the material he had taken from Greek commentators, he divided them into two groups. Some are chance equivocals (*a casu*) and others are deliberate equivocals (*a consilio*). There is no relationship between the multiple senses of chance equivocals, and although Boethius himself gave the example of a proper name, the standard example was the common name "dog", said of a barking animal, a marine animal, and a constellation. As later logicians would emphasize, three acts of imposition were required, and three separate concepts. Deliberate equivocals had four subdivisions. The first is *similitudo*, resemblance, and the standard example was the human being and his pictured likeness, *homo pictus*.[58] The second subdivision is *proportio*, "*analogia*" in Greek. The example given is "*principium*", principle, which denotes unity with respect to number or a point in relation to a line. The third subdivision is *ab uno*, of one origin, and the example used was the word "medical". The last is *ad unum*, in relation to one end, and the standard example, used by Burley, was "healthy" (*sanum*), though Boethius used the word "*salutaris*". Many medieval thinkers, following Averroes, added a fifth subspecies, in relation to one subject, and the standard example was *ens*.[59] These last three can be easily assimilated to Aristotle's *pros hen* equivocation, and they appear as a package in Aquinas's early *Principles of Nature*, as well as in his late commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*.[60]

So far as Burley is concerned, he took the division between chance and deliberate equivocals as basic, saying that he was following both Boethius and Simplicius, and he also gave Boethius's full set of divisions of deliberate equivocation in his middle commentary on the *Categories* and in his questions on the *Sophistici Elenchi*, though in his last commentary on the *Categories* he merely sketched the divisions.[61] However, Burley's most

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[57] Boethius, *In Categorias Aristotelis libri quatuor* in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series latina*, v. 64, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris: 1891), col. 166B–C.

[58] *Homo pictus* is the result of a misreading of Aristotle's word for "animal" (*zoon*) which is a chance equivocal in Greek, a fact of which medieval logicians were unaware. We should also note that Burley in his *In Cat.* 1, 62, reads the passage as saying that just as "*homo*" is equivocal with respect to a living and a painted man, so "*animal*" is equivocal with respect to a living and a painted animal.

[59] Averroes, *In Met.*, *Opera* 8, fol. 65 va.

[60] Thomas Aquinas, *De principiis naturae* in *Opuscula IV* (Rome: 1976), 46–47; Thomas Aquinas, *In Duodecim Libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis Expositio*, ed. M.-R. Cathala and R. Spiazzi (Turin: 1950), 4, lect. 1, nn. 537–39.

[61] *In Cat.* 2, P 184, fol. 172rb–va; *In SE*, 281 (he omits the reference to Simplicius); *In Cat.* 3, sig. c 5ra: "Quarto est notandum secundum Boetium et Simplicium quod equivocationum alia est a casu, alia est a consilio. . . . Equivocatio a consilio est quando equivocum

important move was to classify all four cases of deliberate equivocation as cases of *transumptio*. In part, this move is related to Boethius's commentary, for after his initial analysis Boethius had gone on to say that there seems to be another mode of equivocation that Aristotle is silent about, namely *translatio*.[62] He stated that *translatio* has no property of its own (*translatio nullius proprietatis est*), by which he means that it is not a particular class of word.[63] It may or may not fall under equivocation. If, for reasons of ornament, one calls a steersman a charioteer, the word "charioteer" is not equivocal, for the man is already properly named steersman. However, if the object has no name of its own, as in the case of the picture of a man, one can transfer the word "*homo*" from the living man to his picture, and so the word "*homo*" is equivocal as well as being an example of *translatio*.

The most important source for discussions of *translatio* or *transumptio* in relation to equivocation is *Sophistici elenchi* 166a15–20 where Aristotle writes: "There are three modes of equivocation and amphiboly: one when either the phrase or the name primarily signifies more than one thing, e.g. 'piscis' and 'canis'; another when we are accustomed to speak in that way; a third when words put together signify more than one thing, but taken alone <signify> simply, e.g. 'scit saeculum'."[64] In one place, Burley argued that only the first mode related to equivocation as presented in Aristotle's *Categories*, since in that work he was concerned only with the proper sense of terms, while in the *Sophistici elenchi* he had a wider concern with causes of deception.[65] Nonetheless, in order to harmonize the common modes with the two groups of equivocals given by Boethius, logicians usually confined themselves to saying that chance equivocals belong to the first mode and deliberate equivocals to the second, and

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significat plura propter aliquam similitudinem vel habitudinem ad aliquod unum, et sic animal est equivocum ad animal pictum et ad animal verum, et sic sanum est equivocum ad sanum in urina et sanum in dieta."

[62] Boethius, *In Cat.*, 166D–167A.

[63] This phrase can be read in various ways, and it might also say that *translatio* is not a property of things.

[64] *Aristoteles Latinus VI 1–3. De Sophisticis Elenchis*, ed. B.G. Dod (Leiden: 1975), 9: "Sunt autem tres modi secundum aequivocationem et amphiboliam: unus quidem quando vel oratio vel nomen principaliter significat plura, ut piscis et canis; alius autem quando soliti sumus sic dicere; tertius vero quando compositum plura significat, separatum vero simpliciter, ut 'scit saeculum' . . ."

[65] *In SE*, 282: ". . . Aristoteles in libro Praedicamentorum solum facit mentionem de vocibus ut sunt proprie significativae; huiusmodi voces sunt aequivocae, univocae et denominativae. Analogum enim illud quod <per posterius> significat transumptive significat et non proprie . . ." Burley's remarks echo those of Albertus Magnus, *De Sophisticis Elenchis* in *Opera omnia 2*, ed. Auguste Borgnet (Paris: 1890), 538b–539a.

generally speaking this is the position adopted by Burley. The reference to custom in the second mode, linked with the discussion of *translatio* in Boethius's commentary on the *Categories*, invited logicians to include metaphor under deliberate equivocation. Thus a number of logicians put metaphor in the second mode of equivocation, alongside analogy in the new medieval sense of being said according to priority and posteriority. Moreover, some argued that metaphor should be reduced to analogy,[66] while others, including the author of the *De fallaciis*, sometimes attributed to Aquinas, argued that analogy should be reduced to metaphor.[67] The latter position prevailed at Oxford,[68] and for Duns Scotus the second mode included only metaphor.[69]

Burley adopted much the same position as Scotus in his questions on the *Sophistici elenchi*. Question 12 asks "whether some analogical utterance can signify one thing properly and another improperly",[70] and Burley's reply, which precedes his claim that all four cases of deliberate equivocation are cases of *transumptio*, and hence of analogy, is worth quoting at length. He writes:

> In reply to the question, one can say that an analogical utterance can signify one thing properly and another by transference (*transumptive*). The reason is this: according to Aristotle in *Peri hermeneias*, a name signifies nothing except when it is made a sign (*nota*); <and> in the same way that an utterance is made the sign of a thing, so it is possible for it to signify that very thing. But an utterance is made the sign of a thing in two ways, that is, by imposition and by transference. It is made the sign of a thing by imposition when the utterance, as having the *ratio* of a sign, is assigned (*attribuitur*) to the thing absolutely and by means of (*sub*) a proper *ratio* <of the thing> and not in comparison to another <thing>. <It is made the sign of a thing> by transference when the utterance, taken as having the *ratio* of a sign, is imposed on a thing primarily and by means of a proper *ratio*, and then, because of a similitude to the thing on which it was primarily imposed, or because of a proportion or relation which it has to some other thing, this utterance is transferred to represent some other thing. . . . And thus unless the utterance was primarily imposed on something, it is impossible for it to signify anything else by transference. Thus for an utterance to signify

[66] Lambert, *Logica*, 149–50.

[67] [Aquinas], *De fallaciis* in *Opuscula IV*, 406.

[68] *Fallaciae breves* (*ad modum Oxoniae*) in Clemens Kopp, "Ein kurzer Fehlschlußtraktat: die Fallaciae breves (ad modum Oxoniae). London, British Museum, Royal MSS 12 F XIX, 104rb–105vb," *Miscellanea Mediaevalia* 15 (1982), 264: "Secundus modus huius fallaciae est, quando aliqua dictio significat unum proprie et aliud transumptive, et iste secundus modus est in analogis. . . ." The author uses "*homo depictus*" as an example.

[69] Scotus, *In SE*, q. 15, 337–39.

[70] Burley, *In SE*, 279.

> something by transference it is necessary for it to signify something else by imposition and properly. Hence it is possible for an utterance to signify one thing properly and by imposition, and another thing by transference and improperly.[71]

This passage may suggest that all analogical terms are terms belonging to the second mode of equivocation, and that as a result they are all metaphorical, but as we shall see, Burley construed analogy more widely than that. One issue has to do with the classification of genus terms as analogical. In *Physics* 7.4 (249a 22–25) Aristotle made a remark which, in Latin translation, was interpreted as saying that many equivocations are hidden in a genus.[72] Virtually every late 13th-century logician felt obliged to fit this claim into the framework of equivocation and analogy, even if the consensus was that in the end the use of genus terms was univocal, and, as we shall see, Burley was no different. We should also note that this remark is just the opening of a more extensive passage in which Aristotle claims that some equivocals are maximally distant from univocals, some said by resemblance are less distant, and some which are near either in genus or in resemblance seem to be univocals although they are not.[73] Burley cites this passage only briefly in Question 6 of *Quaestiones super physicam*, where he uses the standard example of the relation between the master of

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[71] *In SE*, 280–81. "Ad quaestionem potest dici quod aliqua vox analoga potest significare unum proprie <et> aliud transumptive. Cuius ratio est haec: per Aristotelem in libro Peri hermenias nomen nihil significat nisi quando fit nota; sicut ergo vox fit nota rei, sic possibile est eam rem ipsam significare; sed vox fit nota rei dupliciter, sc. ex impositione et ex transumptione; ex \im/positione autem fit nota rei quando vox attribuitur rei in ratione signi absolute et sub propria ratione et non in comparatione ad aliud; ex transumptione \autem ut/ quando vox imponitur rei p<rimo> in ratione signi et sub propria ratione, deinde propter similitudinem rei illius cui primo imponebatur vel propter proportionem vel relationem quam <habet> \ad aliquam/ aliam rem transumitur ista vox ad aliquid aliud repraesentandum. . . . Et ita nisi vox primo alicui imponeretur impossibile esset ipsam aliquid aliud ex transumptione significare. Ut ergo vox aliquid significet ex transumptione necesse est ipsam aliquid aliud significare ex impositione [[im]] \et/ proprie. Possibile est ergo vocem significare unum proprie et ex impositione et aliud ex transumptione et improprie."

[72] "in genere latent multe equivocationes": Burley, *In Phys.* 3, fol. 13ra. Aristotle's text as found in *Aristoteles Latinus VII.1*, 271–72, reads: "Et significat ratio hec quod genus non unum aliquod, sed iux<t>a hec latent multa, suntque equivocationum alie quidem multum distantes, alie quidem habentes quandam similitudinem, alie autem proxime aut genere aut similitudine, unde non videntur equivocationes esse cum sint." For some discussion of the issue of genus, see Marta Vittorini, "Univocal and Analogical Genus in Walter Burley's Work", *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 19 (2008), 247–275 (though references to his *Quaestiones super Elenchos Sophisticos* are really references to *Super tractatum fallaciarum*).

[73] Wolfson, "Amphibolous Terms," 474, remarks that an old Latin translation of the Arabic version had the word "*ambiguitas*" in place of "similarity" or "resemblance".

a house and the master of a school to illustrate the final case.[74] In his *In Physicam Aristotelis*, he uses the examples "*canis*" for the first case, "*homo pictus*" for the second, and he mentions only genus for the third.[75]

## *Being and Analogy*

So far little mention has been made of the word *ens*. In the commentaries on Porphyry, *ens* features only in passing. In the *Expositio vetus super librum Porphyrii*, Burley states that *ens* is not a genus, and he explains Porphyry's remark that if anyone calls all beings *entia*, he is speaking equivocally, by saying that "equivocally" here means "not univocally, because analogically".[76] He makes similar remarks about *ens* not being a genus in the *Liber universalium*, where he is merely reporting on Porphyry, and he adds no reference to univocity or to analogy.[77] There is one brief reference to *ens* and analogy in his middle commentary on the *Categories*, but *ens* does not feature in his discussion of the divisions of equivocation or in his discussion of univocity.[78] Nor does it feature in his discussion of the divisions of equivocation in his questions on the *Sophistici elenchi*. For relevant material, we have to turn to the *Super tractatum fallaciarum*, the last commentary on the *Categories*, and the three *Physics* commentaries.

Several positions were possible in relation to *ens*. For John Duns Scotus in his later period, "*ens*" was a strictly univocal term. On the other hand, for Scotus in his earlier period and for a number of other Oxonians, "*ens*" was a chance equivocal.[79] Burley's teacher, Thomas Wylton, apparently adopted this position in his *Physics* commentary, saying that according to

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[74] *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 115rb, B F V 12, fol. 117vb.

[75] *In Phys.* 3, fol. 219va.

[76] *In Porph.* 1, 256: "... illud, quod deberet esse genus omnium, deberet esse maxime commune; sed nihil est magis commune quam ens; igitur nihil posset esse genus omnium nisi ens. Sed ens non potest, quia genus praedicatur univoce, sed ens praedicatur aequivoce; igitur ens non est genus. ¶ Et sciendum, quod sumitur hic aequivoce, id est analogice. Et sic debet haec littera exponi: 'Si quis omnia entia vocet, aequivoce nuncupavit, et non univoce' hoc est et per idem, id est: non univoce, quia analogice."

[77] *In Porph.* 2, sig. b 3rb.

[78] See note 51 above for the brief reference.

[79] For details of Oxford views, see Donati, "La discussione." For some discussion of Oxford authors from the first decade of the 14th century, see E.J. Ashworth, "Analogy, Univocation, and Equivocation in some Early Fourteenth-Century Authors," in *Aristotle in Britain during the Middle Ages*, ed. John Marenbon (Belgium: 1996), 233–47; and E.J. Ashworth, "Analogy and Equivocation in Thomas Sutton, O.P.," in *Vestigia, Imagines, Verba: Semiotics and Logic in Medieval Theological Texts* (*XIIth–XIVth Century*), ed. Costantino Marmo (Turnhout: 1997), 289–303.

the common view "*ens*" was equivocal for the logician, but analogical for the natural philosopher or the metaphysician, as he had shown in his discussion of the second mode of equivocation in his *Sophistici elenchi* commentary.[80] Unfortunately this commentary does not seem to be extant, so it is not clear whether he opted for deliberate rather than chance equivocation. On both of the first two views, true analogy was metaphysical, and no semantic analogy was involved. A third view, generally somewhat later than the others, saw "*ens*" as a deliberate equivocal which corresponded either to more than one related concept or to a single complex concept such as a disjunction.[81] On this view, semantic and metaphysical analogy were parallel. Finally, there was the view that "*ens*" was intermediary between univocals and deliberate equivocals, in such a way that it was not equivocal in any of the normal senses, since there was just one concept involved, but it was not truly univocal, since the concept allowed a prior and a posterior sense. In this case too, semantic analogy and metaphysical analogy were parallel. This fourth thesis was apparently first presented in the 1270s in the framework of a threefold division of analogy proposed by the Parisian authors of *Questions on the Sophistical Refutations*,[82] and it was to become popular in Oxford by the end of the 13th century.

Burley's considered view seems to be the fourth position. There is a key passage in his commentary on the *Super tractatum fallaciarum* in which

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[80] Thomas Wylton, *Quaestiones physicae* I, q. 13, edited in Michael Schmaus, *Thomas Wylton als Verfasser eines Kommentars zur aristotelischen Physik*, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philos.-Hist. Klasse, Sitzungsberichte, Jahrgang 1956, 9 (Munich: 1957). On pp. 12–24 we find the question "utrum ens habeat unam rationem substantiae et accidentium", and on pp. 24–33 we find a different version, with a different answer, "utrum scilicet ens dicatur intentionem unam communem substantiae et accidenti". Wylton suggests (p. 24) that his intent is to give sufficient coverage to alternative views on the issue. In his solution to the first question, he writes (p. 15): "Tenendo ergo viam communem dico, quod ens est aequivocum quantum ad logicum, analogum tamen quantum ad naturalem vel metaphysicum, ut dixi et sufficienter declaravi in quaestionibus I. Elenchorum, in prima scilicet quaestione secundi modi aequivocationis . . ." Cf. Thomas de Wyk, in Ebbesen, "Texts on Equivocation," 142: "analogia duplex est: una pertine<n>s ad naturalem, et est quando aliqua duo vel multa significantur per aliquam vocem unam quae habent attributionem ad invicem sicut se habet ens respectu substantiae et accidentis, hic enim est analogia quantum ad naturalem, quia hic est attributio et ordo inter res significatas ut inter substantiam et accidens, non autem in actu significandi." Ebbesen writes of this text, "Texts on Equivocation," 102, "Probably an English product from the last quarter of the thirteenth century." See also Guillelmus de Chelvestun, quoted in Donati, "La discussione," 76, note 28.

[81] See Ashworth, *Les théories*, 70–75.

[82] Incerti Auctores, *Quaestiones super Sophisticos Elenchos*, ed. Sten Ebbesen, Corpus Philosophorum Danicorum Medii Aevi 7 (Copenhagen: 1977), 133–34 and 315–17.

he discusses the second mode of equivocation. After laying out his beliefs about the relationship between imposition and transference, he writes:

> Because this mode applies to analogical terms, we should know that, for the present <issue>, analogy is threefold, that is, on account of (*a parte*) the concept, on account of the thing, and on account of transference. In the first way *ens* is analogical to substance and accident, since "*ens*" signifies (*importat*) one concept which is found in substance before accident. In the second way animal is analogical to man and donkey, and any genus is analogical in this way to the species which is more perfect and the species which is less perfect. But this analogy pertains not to the logician but to the natural philosopher—it is not the logician who posits analogy in genus but the natural philosopher. In the third way "foot" is analogical, and any utterance that signifies one thing by imposition and another by transference. And it is of analogy taken this third way that this proposition is true: "an unmodified analogical term (*per se dictum*) is taken in the best-known sense (*pro modo famosiori*)". This rule cannot apply to analogical terms of the first and second sort, else these claims would be true: "every *ens* is a substance" and "every animal is a man".[83]

Burley's view is paralleled by another anonymous set of questions on the *Sophistici elenchi* which could date anywhere from the last decade of the 13th century to the first decade of the 14th century.[84] It is worth looking at this author in some detail, since his remarks make explicit what Burley was suggesting, namely that the case of "*ens*" differs from both the genus case and from the second mode of equivocation. The genus case does not involve analogical terms, and the second mode does not involve analogical concepts or things, but "*ens*" is analogical semantically, conceptually, and ontologically. The anonymous author asked whether a word equivocal according to the second mode was analogical, and in his reply he wrote that there are three types of analogy. The first is the analogy of

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[83] Burley, *In Fallac.*, 202. "Quia iste modus est in analogo, sciendum quod analogia est triplex ad praesens, sc. a parte conceptus, et a parte rei, et ex transumptione. Primo modo est ens analogum ad substantiam et accidens quia ens importat unum conceptum qui prius reperitur in substantia quam in accidente. Secundo modo est animal analogum ad hominem et asinum, et quodlibet genus isto modo est analogum ad speciem magis perfectam et ad speciem minus perfectam; sed haec analogia non pertinet ad logicum sed ad naturalem—logicus enim non ponit analogiam in genere, sed naturalis. Tertio modo est 'pes' analogum, et vox quae unum significat ex impositione et aliud ex transumptione. Et de analogo isto tertio modo dicto est haec propositio vera 'Analogum per se dictum stat pro modo famosiori'; sed haec regula non est intelligenda de analogo primo modo dicta et secundo, quia sic essent illae verae 'omne ens est substantia' et 'omne animal est homo'."

[84] Anonymus (SE 83), in Ebbesen, "Texts on Equivocation," 287, 289–90. See also Thomas de Wyk in Ebbesen, "Texts on Equivocation," 142. He drops the genus case.

a cause to what is caused. Substance is the cause of an accident, and so the word "being" (*ens*) is given by imposition to a thing (*res*) common to substance and accident, but more perfect in substance than in accident.[85] This analogy is primarily in things and as a result it is found in both concepts and words. The second type of analogy is the analogy of genus, the analogy of more and less perfect, and the anonymous author speaks neither of an analogy of concepts nor of an analogy of words. The two types of analogy do not prevent univocity, since the terms signify one nature, and so the terms "*ens*" and "animal" do not belong to the second mode of equivocation. That is to say, they are not deliberate equivocals, even if they are not univocal in the strictest sense, which includes only the lowest species of a genus.[86] The third type of analogy is the transfer of sense (*transsumptio*) because of a similitude, and the two examples are "healthy" and "running" said of a man and of water. This type belongs to the second mode of equivocation in the *Sophistici elenchi*, because there are at least two significates (*significata*), the first produced by imposition and the second because of usage (*ex consuetudine loquendi*) and it is a type of analogy found principally in words.

Silvia Donati has found in her reading of *Physics* commentaries that the Oxonian account of a single analogical concept of *ens* was subsequent to and influenced by Scotus's discussion of "*ens*" as univocal,[87] and it is clear that Burley's discussions in his logical works were also subsequent to Scotus. Indeed, Perger has argued that Burley must have read Scotus on the *Sophistici elenchi*.[88] However, Scotus's early logical works make most sense in a context in which the notion of a single concept of *ens* which involves prior and posterior senses while being in some way univocal was already the subject of discussion. Much of what he writes could even be

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[85] Burley also refers to substance as the cause of accidents: see *In Phys.* 1, 193a: "accidentia sunt entia quia sunt in substantia, que est causa entitatis eorum et subiectum eorum".

[86] Anonymus (SE 83), in Ebbesen, "Texts on Equivocation," 290: "Unde prima analogia [corr. ex *analoga*] non impedit univocationem, nec etiam secunda, eo quod illa analogia principaliter est ex parte unius rei quae prius convenit uni quam alteri, et ideo vox significans illam rem habet unum significatum primo, et ideo talis analogia quae est in primo modo et secundo non facit aliquam aequivocationem in termino nec tales termini sunt aequivoci secundo modo. Loquendo tamen de analogia tertio modo dicta, illa facit aequivocationem in termino, quia ibi vox est una et multa sunt significata, et ideo ista analogia principaliter est in voce."

[87] Donati, "La discussione," 78.

[88] Mischa von Perger, "Walter Burley's *Quaestiones libri Elenchorum 1–3 & 13–18*," *Cahiers de l'institut du moyen-âge grec et latin* 76 (2005), 164.

read as a direct attack on Burley, however historically implausible that may be.

In Question 4 of his commentary on the *Categories*, Scotus asked whether the word "*ens*" was purely equivocal or analogical, and he began by saying that some authors attribute analogy to terms in three ways.[89] The first is when a word principally signifies a *ratio* which, when it exists in things, applies to its analogues differently. For the logician, these terms are simply univocal. At the other extreme, there is the case of *translatio*, which is equivalent to deliberate equivocation. Neither the first nor the third case applies to the word "*ens*".[90] The second case is the one that interests us. According to those who accept it, a word is analogical when it signifies one thing as prior and a second thing as posterior. It is against this case that Scotus directs his arguments, both here and in Question 15 of his commentary on the *Sophistici elenchi*, where he asked whether a name could signify one thing as prior and another as posterior.[91] He claimed that this kind of analogy seems to be impossible, and he argued at length both against the doctrine of a single analogical concept which represents its objects according to priority and posteriority and against the view that words can signify according to priority and posteriority.

Now let us turn to Burley's discussion in his questions on the *Physics*. In his early *Expositio cum quaestionibus super Physicam*, Burley concluded that "*ens*" is neither a pure univocal nor a pure equivocal, but analogical.[92] What he meant by this is spelled out, first by a division between three types of analogy. Once more, he tells us that analogy is threefold. Analogy through the more and less perfect covers the genus case, which he does not discuss further in his solution. The second case is analogy through similitude, which concerns *homo pictus*, and brings into play the principle that an unmodified analogical term is taken in the best-known sense. He

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[89] Duns Scotus, *In Cat.*, q. 4, 280–81: "Ponitur autem analogia in vocibus tripliciter: vel quia significant unam rationem primo, quae in exsistendo diversimode convenit duobus vel pluribus, quae dicuntur analogata. . . . Alio modo ponitur analogia in vocibus, quia unum significatur per prius per vocem, et reliquum per posterius. . . . Tertio modo: quod vox uni imponitur proprie, et propter aliquam similitudinem ad illud cui primo imponitur, transfertur vox ad significandum aliud, sicut est in secundo modo aequivocationis, ubi etiam est quodammodo ordo in significando, quia numquam vox transfertur ad significandum aliquid nisi supponatur illam impositam esse ad significandum aliquid proprie, et hoc secundum significat solum propter aliquam similitudinem eius ad illud cui primo imponitur."

[90] Duns Scotus, *In Cat.*, q. 4, 284.

[91] Duns Scotus, *In SE*, q. 15, 331.

[92] *In Phys.* 1, 192b–193a. See the Appendix for the text.

explains below that we are dealing here with *transumptio*, that the analogy is on account of the utterance (*ex parte vocis*), and that it occurs when the utterance signifies one thing *per prius* and another *per posterius* through transference. The third kind of analogy is in accordance with attribution, and this is subdivided into three types. Attribution to one subject covers the case of "healthy" said of urine, medicine, and an animal; attribution to one agent covers the case of "medicinal" said of medicine itself and the food and potions related to medicine; and attribution to one substance covers the case of *ens*, for substance is *ens* per se, whereas accidents are *entia* only through attribution to the substance in which they exist, and by which they are caused. What we have here is a reworking of the subdivisions of deliberate equivocation inspired by Averroes which were discussed earlier. Burley does not tell us how he classifies the first two cases of attribution, but the case of *ens* turns out to be both univocal and analogical, albeit in different senses. To explain this, he distinguishes between two kinds of univocity. The first concerns the relationship between the utterance and its significate, and every term with just one significate is univocal in this sense. The second concerns the relation of significates to their appellates, and every term whose significate belongs to its contents in such a way that it does not belong to one before another is univocal in this sense. *Ens*, then, is univocal in sense one, but not in sense two, and this allows us to call it both univocal and analogical.

In the *Quaestiones super Physicam*, Burley begins his solution with the same distinction between two kinds of univocity.[93] He explains that the first type is called an ambiguous univocal (*univocum ambiguum*) while the second is called a pure univocal (*univocum purum*), and he claims that Aristotle's definition of univocals in his *Categories* covers both types, because the one *ratio substantialis* is just one *significatum*. On the other hand, when Algazel said in his *Metaphysics* that a name is univocal only when it belongs to its *appellata* in the same way, he was speaking of the pure univocal. In this solution, Burley's vocabulary is very close to that of his master, Thomas Wylton, in the latter's second treatment of *ens*.[94]

[93] *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 114va, B F V 12, fol. 117ra. See the Appendix for the text.

[94] Wylton in Schmaus, *Thomas Wylton*, 26–27: "ens habet unum conceptum communem substantiae et aliis praedicamentis . . . iste conceptus non est pure univocus, quia univocum [*corr. ex* univoce] aequaliter et eodem modo respicit sua contenta . . . Et ideo ratio entis non omnino univoce sed analogice, scilicet secundum prius et posterius participatur ab hiis. Algazel [*corr. ex* Alagazel] tamen dicit, quod potest dici nomen ambiguum."

In his last commentary on the *Physics*, as in his last commentary on the *Categories*, Burley distinguishes three levels of univocity.[95] In the broadest sense, a univocal term has a single concept which corresponds to a number of things either equally or according to a difference between priority and posteriority. In the stricter sense, the single concept corresponds to a number of things equally. In the strictest sense, the concept cannot be divided in accordance with essential differences, such as rationality. There is a corresponding hierarchy of equivocal terms. In the broadest sense, an equivocal term signifies either several concepts or a single concept that can be divided by appeal to essential differences, or a single concept that applies to more than one thing according to a difference between priority and posteriority. As a result, "*ens*" is univocal in the broad sense, but equivocal in both the broad and the proper sense. In the *Categories* commentary, Burley also notes that analogical terms of this sort fall under the broad sense of univocity.

We now have to consider some of Burley's reasons for considering "*ens*" to be univocal, at least in a broad sense. In his lengthy *Quaestiones super Physicam*, as well as in the much briefer *Expositio cum quaestionibus*, we find a number of standard arguments for supposing that "*ens*" ought to be univocal. One of these is an argument about comparison which has to do both with ontology and with our ability to make comparative claims about the relation of basic principles to what flows from them and about the relation of substance to accidents. This argument was normally based on three texts.[96] The first is *Metaphysics* 2.1 (993b24–31) which argues that the principal cause of an object's being F must itself be F to the highest degree, so that "the principles of eternal things must be always most true" and that "as each thing is in respect of being, so is it in respect of truth". This passage, which implies that the principles of eternal things must be maximally *entia* as compared to other *entia*, was linked with *Physics* 7.4 (248b7–10) according to which equivocals cannot be compared, and *Topics* 1.15 (107b13–19) according to which univocals are always comparable. It immediately follows that "*ens*" must be univocal. The argument, especially with respect to the claim, based on *Metaphysics* 7.1 (1028a 10–30), that "substance is more of a being than accident is" (*substantia est*

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[95] Burley, *In Cat.* 3, sig. c 5 ra–rb (here he uses the verb "*convenire*"); *In Phys.* 3, fols. 12vb–13ra (here he uses the verb "*competere*") and fol. 220vb (here he uses the classification "*large*", "*stricte*", et "*magis stricte*"). For the first text from *In Phys.* 3, see the Appendix.

[96] See Ashworth, "Analogy, Univocation, and Equivocation," 238–40 and Ashworth, "Analogy and Equivocation," 294–95.

| *Sense* | *Univocal Term* | *Equivocal Term* |
|---|---|---|
| Broad (*communiter*) | One concept which corresponds to several things:<br>1. equally, without being divisible by essential differences, e.g. *species specialissima*<br>2. equally, but divisible by essential differences, e.g. genus<br>3. according to priority and posteriority, e.g. *ens* | Two concepts, e.g. *canis*<br>OR<br>one concept which corresponds to several things:<br>1. equally, but divisible by essential differences, e.g. genus<br>2. according to priority and posteriority, e.g. *ens* |
| Proper (*proprie*) | One concept which corresponds to several things:<br>1. equally, without being divisible by essential differences, e.g. *species specialissima*<br>2. equally, but divisible by essential differences, e.g. genus | Two concepts, e.g. *canis*<br>OR<br>one concept which corresponds to several things according to priority and posteriority, e.g. *ens* |
| More proper (*magis proprie*) | One concept which corresponds to several things equally, without being divisible by essential differences, e.g. *species specialissima* | Two concepts, e.g. *canis* |

*magis ens quam accidens*), is found in all three of Burley's works on the *Physics*.[97] Interestingly, Thomas Wylton, in the context of the claim that "*ens*" is equivocal, appealed to metaphor to solve the problem.[98] Two of the other standard arguments that Burley employed were epistemological. If "*ens*" is equivocal, then we will not be able to move from knowledge of what is caused to the first cause (namely, God).[99] Nor can we explain how we might know that something is a being while doubting whether it

[97] *In Phys*. 1, 192b, *In Phys*. 2, GC 512/543, fol. 114rb, B F V 12, fol. 116va, *In Phys*. 3 fol. 12vb. See also Scotus, *In Cat*., q. 4, 275, and Wylton in Schmaus, *Thomas Wylton*, 12 and 16.

[98] Wylton in Schmaus, *Thomas Wylton*, 16: "secundum ens non est comparatio proprio modo dicta, sed metaphorica tantum".

[99] *In Phys.* 1, 192b; *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 114rb–va, B F V 12, fol. 116vb.

is substance or accident unless *ens* has a concept distinct from those of the categories.[100]

It is one thing to prove that "*ens*" ought to be univocal; it is another thing to show how it can be univocal, given the requirement of a common thing corresponding to the univocal term, and given the basic premise that *ens* is not a genus. Burley's answer to this problem is to be found in his replies to a long series of arguments against the univocity of "*ens*". One problem concerns how *ens* descends into the ten categories, whether through itself, or through something added to it.[101] Both alternatives are rejected in favor of the claim that *ens* descends into substance through substance, into quality through quality, and so on.[102] The ten categories are thus enabled to agree in being, while remaining primarily diverse (*primo diversa*), because they do not agree in being as something that is a part of their quiddity, but rather as something that accompanies it.[103] This point also solves a problem concerning the first cause, for if being were to be included as a part, God would be composite rather than simple.[104] That being should accompany essence does not compromise simplicity. Finally, since *ens* is not a genus, the unity enjoyed by *ens* is a minor unity, but, Burley argues, this is enough to serve as the basis for a univocal term.[105] His final conclusion is that "*ens*" signifies not just a common concept, but

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[100] *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 114rb, B F V 12, fol. 116vb.

[101] *In Phys.* 1, 192a; *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 113vb, B F V 12, fol. 116ra. Cf. Wylton in Schmaus, *Thomas Wylton*, 14, 25–26.

[102] *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 115va, B F V 12, fol. 118ra–rb. In *In Phys.* 1, 193b–194a he writes: "Ad aliud argumentum, dicendum quod ens descendit in substantiam et in alia predicamenta per substantiam et per alia predicamenta, | ita quod idem est in quod ens descendit et per quod ens descendit, nec descendit ens per se ipsum in substantiam nec per aliquid additum substantie, sed ens per substantiam descendit in substantiam."

[103] *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 115va, B F V 12, fol. 118ra–rb. In *In Phys.* 1, 193b he writes: "Ad aliud argumentum, dicendum quod 10 predicamenta conveniunt in ente et tamen sunt primo diversa; et quando dicitur quod ista que conveniunt in aliquo non sunt primo diversa, dicendum quod ista que conveniunt in aliquo quod est de quidditate illorum non sunt primo diversa. Ista tamen que conveniunt in aliquo concomitante quidditatem illorum bene possint esse primo diversa; et quia ens non est de quidditate 10 predicamentorum, sed est quedam concomitans quidditatem predicamentorum, ideo non obstaret quod 10 predicamenta convenientes [*corr. ex* conveniant] in ente possint esse primo diversa." Cf. Wylton, in Schmaus, *Thomas Wylton*, 29. Referring to Avicenna (as did Burley in *In Phys.* 2), he writes: "Ens autem, ut dicit, non est de quidditate, sed est concomitans quidditatem."

[104] *In Phys.* 1, 194a; *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 115va, B F V 12, fol. 118rb.

[105] *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 115vb, B F V 12, fol. 118va.

a common thing external to the mind. It is common not just to the categories, but to differences and other beings.[106]

Much research remains to be done on Burley and his contemporaries, especially in relation to his commentaries on the *Physics*. It is not yet clear how original his views on being and analogy were, but it is clear that his discussions were embedded in an already established Oxford tradition.

[106] *In Phys.* 2, GC 512/543, fol. 116va, B F V 12, fol. 119rb: "Ex istis apparet quod rationes facte ad oppositum probant quod ens importet rem extra animam communem ad decem predicamenta, et non solum conceptum communem, et similiter quod ens sit commune differentiis sicut aliis entibus, prout dictum est in positione."

## Appendix

A. *Expositio cum quaestionibus super Physicam* [*In Phys. 1*]

[p. 192b] Ad conclusionem dicendum quod ens nec est [p. 193a] purum univocum nec purum equivocum, sed analogum. Quod non sit purum equivocum patet, quia ut—? est, hec esset omni modo falsa, "substantia est perfectius ens quam accidens", sive ens accipitur pro substantia sive pro accidente. Nec est purum univocum, quia si sic equaliter competeret prime cause, substantie et accidenti, et ita substantia non esset magis ens \quam accidens/. Et ideo est analogum medium inter purum univocum et purum equivocum.

Sed sciendum quod analogia est triplex. Quedam est analogia per magis perfectum et minus perfectum, et sic genus est analogum respectu suarum specierum, quia una species est magis perfecta et alia est minus perfecta.

Alia est analogia secundum similitudinem [ne?], et tali analogia est "homo" analogum ad hominem verum et hominem pictum, nam hec vox "homo" imponitur ad significandum hominem verum et secundum similitudinem inter hominem verum et hominem pictum transsumitur ad significandum hominem pictum. Et de tali analogia hec vera est: "analogum per se positum stat pro modo famosiori".

Tertia est analogia secundum attributionem, et ista est tribus modis quia [*corr. ex* quod] quedam est analogia per attributionem ad subiectum suum. Urina enim dicitur sana quia est signum sanitatis, et medicina dicitur sana quia est efficiens sanitatis, et animal dicitur sanum quia est subiectum sanitatis, et "sanum" per prius dicitur de animali quam de urina vel de medicina quia in animali formaliter est sanitas.

Secundo modo dicitur aliquid analogum per attributionem ad unum agens et sic "medicinale" dicitur de medicina et de potione et de cibo. Unde cibum et potio dicuntur medicinalia per attributionem ad unum agens sicut ad medicinam.

Tertio modo dicitur analogia per attributionem ad substantiam. Substantia enim est ens per se. Non est? ipsa ens ab alia; et accidentia sunt entia quia sunt in substantia, que est causa entitatis eorum et subiectum eorum. Unde accidentia non dicuntur entia nisi per attributionem ad substantiam in qua sunt.

Intelligendum est quod univocatio est duplex. Quedam est univocatio vocis ad significatum, et tale univocum est omnis terminus tantum unum significans univocum.

Alia est univocatio significatorum ad appellativa, et tale univocum est omnis terminus univocus cuius significatum equaliter(?) competit suis contentis ita quod non per prius uni contento quam reliquo.

Primo modo est ens univocum quia tantum unum significat. Secundo modo non est ens univocum sed analogum, quia per prius competit substantie quam accidenti, et sic potest concedere quod ens aliquo modo est univocum et alio modo est analogum loquendo de illis diversimode.

Ad hoc est alia distinctio de analogia, nam quedam est analogia ex parte vocis, et est quando vox significat plura, et unum per prius et reliquum per posterius. Et isto modo est hoc nomen "homo" analogum, quia significat hominem verum et hominem pictum, sed per prius significat hominem verum ut ab impositione, et per posterius hominem pictum ex transumptione.

Alia est analogia ex parte rei, et est quando vox significat tantum unum, et significatum illius competit pluribus secundum [p. 193b] prius et posterius. Et isto modo est hoc nomen "ens" analogum, quia hoc nomen "ens" non significat nisi unum, sed significatum entis per prius competit substantie quam accidenti.

B. *Quaestiones super Physicam* [*In Phys.* 2]

[GC fol. 114va, B fol. 117ra] Ad questionem dico quod duplex est univocatio, una que est vocis in comparatione ad significatum solum, alia ubi cum univocatione vocis ad significatum est univocatio illius significati respectu contentorum. Univocum primo modo dictum dicitur univocum ambiguum. Univocum secundo modo dictum dicitur univocum purum. Ista distinctio habetur in suo simili a Commentatore 7° Physicorum commento 26° ubi dicitur quod univocum [B; GC: equivocum] est duplex, [equivocum] purum et ambiguum. Ad utrumque istorum modorum extendebat Philosophus nomen univoci in Predicamentis ubi dixit quod univoca sunt quorum nomen commune et ratio substantialis eadem, quia in utroque modo univoci invenitur [*add.* B] una ratio substantialis, id est unum significatum. Quod illud sit univocum purum ubi est univocatio vocis ad significatum et similiter significati respectu contentorum non est dubium. De univoco vero sic dicto loquitur Algazel Metaphysica sua tractatu primo, ubi dicit quod nomen non est univocum nisi quia convenit suis appellatis multis eodem modo. Ex hoc patet quod ad talem univocationem non sufficit unitas significati, sed oportet quod significatum conveniat suis appellatis eodem modo. Aliqua tamen est univocatio cui sufficit unitas vocis, cum [ex] unitate significati, ut ex diffinitione univocorum patet in Predicamentis.

Per istam distinctionem respondeo ad questionem. Si queratur an ens sit univocum purum, dico quod non, quia univocum purum appello quando est univocatio tam vocis ad significatum quam significati ad contenta. . . .

[GC fol. 114vb, B fol. 117rb] Propter istum ordinem predicamentorum in ente secundum prius et posterius, secundum magis et minus, dico quod ens non est purum univocum. Et si queras a qua unitate a parte rei accipitur univocatio que ponitur in significato entis, dico secundum quod dicit [*add.* B] Commentator 12° Metaphysice commento 29° ubi dicit quod principia omnium sunt eadem secundum assimilationem. Sic dico a parte ista quod ab unitate secundum assimilationem vel ex unitate proportionis vel ordinis potest sufficienter accipi univocatio significati ipsius entis. Ipsa enim non est univocatio pura et perfecta, ut dictum est, quia talis univocatio non est nisi ubi est una forma sicut forma generis, secundum quod dicit Commentator 3° metaphysice commento 10° sic dicens: unum et ens non sunt genera sed utrumque habet differentiam unam propriam absque eo quod convenit in unam naturam. Et impossibile est quod aliquod predicetur predicatione generis de rebus habentibus formas diversas que non communicant in una forma numero. Hec ille. Ex hoc patet quod ad unitatem generis requiritur una forma et una natura, sed non est tanta unitas correspondens univocationi entis, et ideo non est univocum purum et perfectum sicut genus.

Secundam partem positionis, scilicet quod ens sic [*add.* B] sit univocum quod habeat unum significatum, probo per rationem Algazelis . . .

[GC fol. 115ra, B fol. 117vb] Ideo breviter sic declaratum, sufficit dicere pro forma quaestionis quod ens non est univocum purum et perfectum respectu

predicamentorum, quia significatum suum non eodem modo, sed secundum prius et posterius convenit predicamentis. Est tamen univocum imperfectum et ambiguum, quia illi voci correspondet unum primum significatum, non obstante quod illud significatum non sit univocum respectu suorum contentorum, quia convenit eis secundum prius et posterius et secundum fortius et debilius, sicut ostendunt auctoritates.

C. *In Physicam Aristotelis Expositio et Quaestiones* [*In Phys. 3*]

[fol. 12vb] Aliud dubium est utrum ens dicatur de decem predicamentis equivoce.

Et videtur quod sic, quia Philosophus dicit quod hec est principium maxime proprium omnium quod est, id est ens, multipliciter dici. Et Commentator, 10° *Metaphysice* commento octavo, dicit quod ens significat quodlibet predicamentorum prima significatione et sine medio, non sicut genus significat suas species per medium; sed illud quod significat plura prima significatione et sine medio est equivocum; ergo etc.

In contrarium arguitur: si ens esset equivocum, tunc ista esset falsa: "substantia est magis ens vel perfectius ens quam accidens". Sive ens accipiatur pro substantia sive pro accidente, semper esset falsa; et similiter illa esset falsa: "accidens non est ens nisi quia entis", quoniam pro quocumque acciperetur ens, semper esset falsa; igitur etc.

Dicendum igitur quod sicut univocum dicitur multipliciter, ita et equivocum. Nam univocum dicitur tribus modis: communiter, proprie, et magis proprie.

(1) Illud dicitur univocum communiter quod importat unum conceptum tantum, sive ille conceptus competat pluribus equaliter sive secundum prius et posterius. Et hoc modo loquitur Philosophus in *Predicamentis* dicens: "univoca dicuntur quorum nomen est commune et ratio substantie eadem, id est, conceptus essentialis idem". Et sic etiam loquitur Philosophus secundo *Metaphysice* ubi vult quod prima causa, [fol. 13ra] scilicet Deus, est primum verum, quia verum dicitur univoce de prima causa et de aliis veris, et quia prima causa est causa omnium verorum in eo quod sunt vera, ideo prima causa est primum verum, quia quod dicitur univoce de causa et causato, prius dicitur de causa. Et patet sic "verum" dicitur univoce, quamvis dicatur secundum prius et posterius, sed hec univocatio est communiter dicta.

(2) Proprie vero illud dicitur univocum quod importat unum conceptum convenientem pluribus equaliter; et sic loquitur Algazel tractatu primo sue *Metaphysice*, ubi vult quod dicatur univocum quod dicitur de pluribus sine differentia prioris et posterioris et sine differentia potentie et debilitatis.

(3) Univocum autem magis proprie est illud quod solum dicitur de pluribus differentibus numero solum que non differunt per differentias essentiales nec secundum magis perfectum et minus perfectum. Et illo modo loquitur Philosophus de univoco septimo huius, ubi vult quod genus non sit univocum sed equivocum. Nam dicit Philosophus quod in genere latent multe equivocationes, id est, multe diversitates specifice et formales.

Eodem etiam modo dicitur "equivocum" tripliciter, videlicet communiter, proprie, et magis proprie.

(1) Unde communiter loquendo, omne illud est equivocum quod importat unum conceptum convenientem differentibus specie; et sic loquitur Philosophus septimo huius dicens quod in genere latent multe equivocationes; et illo modo dicimus quod generatio est equivoca, quoniam generans et generatum non sunt eiusdem speciei specialissime.
(2) Et proprie illud est equivocum quia importat unum conceptum non equaliter et eque primo convenientem eis quibus competit.
(3) Sed equivocum magis proprie dicitur illud quod non importat unum conceptum sed plures.

Cum igitur queritur utrum ens sit equivocum vel univocum, dico quod communiter loquendo de univocatione sic ens est univocum quia importat unum conceptum, ut probant rationes in oppositum. Sed non est univocum proprie, quia non competit equaliter omnibus vel illis de quibus dicitur, quia in equivocis non est comparatio. Nec est univocum magis proprie quia non dicitur solum de differentibus numero solo, sed etiam de differentibus genere et specie.

Dico etiam quod ens est equivocum communiter et proprie. Est enim equivocum communiter quia importat unum conceptum convenientem pluribus differentibus specie. Et est equivocum proprie quia importat unum conceptum qui non competit equaliter quibus competit. Sed non est equivocum magis proprie, quia non importat plures conceptus. Et per hoc solvuntur argumenta.

CHAPTER FIVE

# UNIVERSALS AND INDIVIDUALS

Hans-Ulrich Wöhler[1]

Medieval philosophers had debated at length the relationship between universals and individuals long before Burley. Fundamental disagreements on the issue had taken place in Scholastic philosophy and theology since the 11th century and mutually exclusive positions gradually emerged. At the beginning of the 14th century, when Burley began his philosophical activity, nominalism was enjoying a revival. Peter John Olivi at the end of the 13th and William of Ockham at the beginning of the 14th centuries were formulating wide-ranging arguments to substantiate their view that reality comprised individuals only and that universals merely existed in human thought (and speech) as natural (and conventional) signs. On the contrary, realists argued against drawing an identity between universals and signs, instead emphasizing the extramental reality of universal entities, outside the realm of signs, in the form of generic and specific natures (or essences). Yet there were differences of opinion even within these two basic currents of thought in the discussion about universals.[2]

Burley was intensely involved in these debates during his whole philosophical activity from the first decade to the fourth decade of the14th century. The focus of his thought and writings from the 1320s onwards was his theoretical disagreement with the views of Ockham. Only in this context can the premises, motives, and development of Burley's notions of individual and universal be adequately understood—since, as is well known, the *Doctor planus et perspicuus* evolved his position on universals from a more moderate doctrine inspired by Thomas Aquinas and Henry of Ghent to a radical and original realist theory according to which a relationship of

[1] I am grateful to Alessandro D. Conti for having discussed with me an earlier draft of this chapter.

[2] On the conflict between nominalists and realists in the late Middle Ages see Alessandro D. Conti, "Categories and Universals in the Later Middle Ages," in *Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Categories*, ed. Lloyd Newton (Leiden: 2008), 369–409; Conti, "Realism," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Robert Pasnau, vol. 2 (Cambridge: 2010), 647–60; Joel Biard, "Nominalism," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Pasnau, 661–73.

*real distinction* holds between individuals and universal substances.[3] The aim of this contribution is precisely to illustrate the changes in Burley's thought and show the distinctiveness of his final approach to the problem of universals, as his final view is of fundamental importance for a correct understanding of his whole philosophy.

The chapter is divided into four main parts. In the first two parts, Burley's fundamental contentions and theoretical premises in relation to both individuals and universals will be described. Next follows a consideration of Burley's discourse on the relationship between individuals and universals. The conclusion contains a brief summary of his main doctrines and places his theory in historical perspective. Burley's theories will be illustrated by means of source references and quotations from his various works. These references will concentrate on Burley's middle commentary on the *Categories* (before 1309), his commentary on the *De anima* (before 1316), the last commentaries on Aristotle's *Physics* (1324–34) and the *Ars vetus* (1337), and his *Tractatus de universalibus* (after 1337), as Burley's development can be fully grasped only through all these works.

## 1. *Burley's Notion of Individuality*[4]

The *Doctor planus et perspicuus* explains at length his conception of individuality mainly in his many commentaries on the *Ars vetus* and in the tracts *De formis* and *De universalibus*. There are no substantial differences between his various formulations of the concept of the individual except for the relationship between individuals and universals, which in his last works is totally different from the preceding one. Thus in his middle commentary on the *Categories*[5] and in the first book of his commentary on

[3] On the development of Burley's thought on categories, universals, and supposition, and his polemic against Ockham's nominalism, see Paul Vincent Spade, "Some Epistemological Implications of the Burley–Ockham Dispute," *Franciscan Studies* 35 (1975), 212–22; Alessandro D. Conti, "Ontology in Walter Burley's Last Commentary on the *Ars vetus*," *Franciscan Studies* 50 (1990), 121–76; Conti, "Ockham and Burley on Categories and Universals: a Comparison," *The Modern Schoolman* 86.1–2 (2008–09), 181–210; and the second and sixth chapters of this same volume "The Ockham–Burley Dispute," 49–84, and "Categories," 191–222.

[4] On the notion of the individual in Burley see Hans-Ulrich Wöhler, "Das 'realistische' Individualitaetskonzept Walter Burleys im geschichtlichen Kontext," in *Individuum und Individualitaet im Mittelalter*, ed. J.A. Aertsen and Andreas Speer, Miscellanea Mediaevalia 24 (Berlin: 1996), 313–26.

[5] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de substantia*, provisional edition by A.D. Conti available at http://www-static.cc.univaq.it/diri/lettere/docenti/conti/Allegati/WB_praedicamenta.pdf, 34, 25–35, 3.

the *De anima* (q. 3: "utrum universale habeat esse extra animam")[6] Burley affirms that universal substances have no being (*esse*) outside that of their individuals, and a singular substance, like Socrates, is made up by singular form and matter, and by any substantial universal predicated of it. On the contrary, in his last writings (after 1324) he claims that universals fully exist outside the mind and are *really distinct* from the individuals they are present in, and individual substances are not composed of anything but singular form and matter.

Burley uses the Latin terms "*individuum*", "*particulare*", "*singulare*", and "*suppositum*" to refer to what is individual. Like Aristotle (*Categories*, 2, 1b 8), he defines a singular in general as that which cannot be said of anything else.[7] This definition applies to both primary (or singular or individual) substances and singular (or individual) accidents (*accidentia singularia*), but Burley considers only the singular substance to be of major philosophical interest. According to him, not being in a subject, having an essence, autonomy, and independent existence, and the capacity of underlying accidental forms are the main aspect of substances. This means that primary substances alone are substances properly speaking, while matter and form and substantial differences are not. This entails that primary substances are assigned a unique position in Burley's ontology: they exist actually (*proprie*), first in order (*principaliter*), and to the highest degree (*maxime*). This is due to the fact that primary substances, as opposed to accidents, are the irreducible and primary units of being and constitute the existential basis not only of all the kinds of accidents but of secondary substances as well (i.e. genera and species of the substance).[8]

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[6] See Burley, *Expositio libri De anima* (before 1316), Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. MS 2151, fol. 11ra (cited according to Conti, "Ontology in Walter Burley's last Commentary on the *Ars vetus*," 139): "Dicendum est ad primam quod universale habet esse in singulari. Et concedendum est quod universale praedicatum in quid de singulari est pars illius singularis . . . Ad aliam, quae probat quod universale non est pars substantiae singularis, dicendum quod universale est pars substantiae determinatae, nec componitur Sortes sufficienter ex hac materia et ex hac forma; immo ex hac materia, et ex hac forma et ex universalibus praedicatis in quid de eo."

[7] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum*, in *Expositio super Artem Veterem Porphyrii et Aristotelis* (Venice: 1497; repr. Frankfurt am Main: 1967), fol. c6ra: "Et nondici-de est proprietas singularis." See also the *Expositio vetus super librum Praedicamentorum* (Burley's first, short commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*), edited by Mischa von Perger, *Franciscan Studies* 61 (2003), 64. Burley follows Porphyry's and Boethius's interpretation of the text—see Porphyry, *In Aristotelis Categorias commentarium*, in *Isagoge et in Aristotelis Categorias Commentarium*, ed. A. Busse, Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca IV.1 (1887), 74; and Boethius, *In Categorias Aristotelis libri quattuor*, PL 64: 170C.

[8] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum*, fol. d2rb.

Departing from these theoretical premises derived from Aristotle's *Categories*, Burley is in a position to begin a discussion about the essence, functions, and conditions of existence of individuals. What constitutes the individuality of individuals? Are there principles of individuation (*principia individuationis*)? How can individuals be distinguished from one another and from universals? Burley considers individual substances as synthetic entities made of particular matter and form.[9] It is possible to differentiate two distinct individuals belonging to one and the same species, such as Socrates and Plato, by means of their particular matter, substantial form, and singular accidents. As a consequence two individuals are distinguished from one another materially (*materialiter*), formally (*formaliter*), and even accidentally (*accidentaliter*).[10] Burley thinks that singular matter and form are the two main constituents of the being of individual substances as well as two of the three principles required for distinguishing individuals from one another. He calls these conditions of being intrinsic principles (*principia intrinseca*) or alternatively essential constituents (*partes essentiales*).[11] He thus absolutely adopts a synthetic principle of individuation (i.e. constitutive synthetic conditions for the

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[9] See Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis expositio et quaestiones* (Venice: 1501; repr. Hildesheim: 1972—to be cited as *In Physicam Aristotelis*), lib. I, fol. 9va: "Deus potest annihilare Sortem, quamvis non destruat totum genus substantie, quia ad hoc quod Sortes annihilaretur sufficit annihilare principia intrinseca Sortis, scilicet ex quibus constituitur Sortes, ut hanc materiam et hanc formam"; *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum*, fol. d3rb: "Unde annihilata hac materia et hac forma annihilatur Sortes, quia Sortes non componitur nisi ex hac materia et hac forma"; and *Expositio super librum sex principiorum*, in *Expositio super Artem Veterem Porphyrii et Aristotelis*, fol. h5rb: "Sed individua substantie, que nec sunt in subiecto nec dicuntur de subiecto, non sunt forme, sed sunt composita ex materia et forma."

[10] Burley, *Expositio super Porphyrii Isagogen*, in *Expositio super Artem Veterem Porphyrii et Aristoteles*, fol. b3vb: "Intelligendum etiam quod unum individuum substantie non distinguitur ab alio solum per huiusmodi proprietates accidentales (*lectio dubia*), sed formaliter per suam formam et materialiter per suam materiam. Unde Sortes distinguitur a Platone accidentaliter per sua accidentia, formaliter per suam formam, et materialiter per suam materiam." See also Burley's *De formis*, ed. F.J.D. Scott, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für die Herausgabe ungedruckter Texte aus der mittelalterlichen Geisteswelt 4 (1970), 9–10: "Distinctio vero individuorum sub eadem specie est tam per materiam quam per formam quam etiam per accidentia. Verbi gratia: Sortes distinguitur materialiter per materiam suam a Platone distinctione individuali et formaliter per formam suam et accidentaliter per accidentia sua. Et ita est triplex distinctio, scilicet materialis, formalis et accidentalis."

[11] Burley, *De toto et parte*, ed. H. Shapiro and F. Scott, *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 33 (1966), 302: "Alio modo dicitur pars essentialis, et sic materia et forma sunt partes subiecti compositi. Unde principia simplicia per se constituencia compositum dicuntur partes essentiales eiusdem, et pars isto modo dicta dicitur pars respectu totius essentialis, videlicet respectu compositi, quod est per se et essentialiter unum."

existence of individuals).[12] However, the possibilities of differentiation (*distinctio*) between the individuals of one and the same species are not only determined by the intrinsic principles of each individual, but also by a yet further possibility of unmistakable differentiation through accidental differences. Whereas the essential constituents and intrinsic principles of individuals constitute unchanging distinguishing features, accidental differences can be seen as variable distinguishing features. Altogether Burley names seven such distinguishing features for human individuals. No single one of these properties alone makes one individual distinct from another, but rather the sum of all of them. Burley defines them as form (*forma*), external shape (*figura*), place (*locus*), time (*tempus*), name (*nomen*), origin (*sanguis*), and homeland (*patria*).[13] Immediately after listing these accidental distinguishing features between (human) individuals, he points out that Porphyry did not regard these as constitutive components of individuals but merely as their incidental properties (i.e. accidents).[14] It can be concluded from this that Burley adopts a plurality of specific criteria (material, formal, and accidental) to allow for the clear differentiation (*distinctio*) between individuals of one and the same species, but only in the particular matter and form of any given individual does he identify the constituent basis of each individual. The thesis of a threefold distinction among individuals of one species should consequently not be seen as identical with that of the synthetic principle of individuation on the basis of the particular matter and form of an individual.[15]

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[12] I do not agree with Marilyn McCord Adams, "Universals in the Early 14th Century," in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, ed. N. Kretzmann, A. Kenny, and J. Pinborg (Cambridge: 1982), 413–39, according to whom Burley would be very near to Scotus's position on the problem of individuation, since also singular matter plays an important role in the process of individuation. He appears to be nearer to Kilwardby's later view on the subject as manifested in his questions on the *Sentences*, where the Dominican master claims that the intrinsic causes of individuation are form and matter.

[13] Burley, *Expositio super Porphyrii Isagogen*, fol. b3va–b: "Et dicit quod quodlibet individuum constat ex multis accidentibus, quorum collectio non potest simul reperiri in alio individuo, cuiusmodi proprietates sunt qualitas, figura, locus et tempus. Unde septem sunt proprietates, quarum collectio non potest simul reperiri in duobus individuis. Unde versus: 'Forma, figura, locus, tempus, cum nomine sanguis, patria sunt septem, que non habet unus et alter.' Iste enim proprietates individuales sunt, que nunquam eodem numero reperiuntur simul in diversis individuis." See also the *Expositio vetus super librum Porphyrii*, ed. Mischa von Perger, *Franciscan Studies* 59 (2001), 258.

[14] Burley, *Expositio super Porphyrii Isagogen*, fol. b3vb: "Nec intendit hic auctor dicere quod huiusmodi proprietates sunt constitutive individui substantie, sed insunt illi non sicut partes, sed sicut accidentia."

[15] On Burley's theory of individuation see the fundamental study of Ivan Boh, "Walter Burley," in *Individuation in Scholasticism: The Later Middle Ages and the Counter-Reformation, 1150–1650*, ed. Jorge J.E. Gracia (Albany: 1994), 347–72.

Individual substances, the primary beings in Burley's ontology, are therefore integrated in a hylemorphic world structure. They are constituted by individual complexes of matter and form, and are, moreover, the bearers of different variable properties, the accidents. But it is equally absolutely fundamental to their condition of primary existence that these individuals are also instantiations of secondary substances or universal forms. Universal forms express the unchanging species, namely the common essence, of individuals, whereas accidental forms determine external supplementary and contingent properties. As Burley notes in his commentary on the *Liber sex principorum*, universal forms thus express the invariable condition of being present in individuals as complete entities, whereas changeability in the world is attributable to accidental forms in the concrete manifestations of any given individual.[16] The fact that certain changes from one kind of property to its opposite can be observed in objects in the world means that the bearer of these opposites and observable changes can be nothing other than a primary substance. In his middle and last commentaries on Aristotle's *Categories*, Burley clearly assigns to individual substances the characteristic feature of being the identical bearers of opposing properties in the process of mutability and change. Only in a secondary and indirect sense could this important function of substances also be attributed to a secondary substance.[17] Hence individual substances are also the focus of mutability and change in the world, although this must be understood relatively, since substantial forms or universal forms guarantee individuals a certain stability of being.

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[16] Burley, *Expositio super librum sex principiorum*, fol. h3rb: "Et enim forma compositioni contingens, id est adveniens composito ex materia et forma, id est individuo substantie, unde tam forma universalis et substantialis, et etiam forma accidentialis advenit, sed aliter et aliter. Nam forma substantialis advenit composito in fieri, et forma accidentialis advenit composito in facto esse. Et forma universalis quelibet, ut humanitas et animalitas, cum sint forme totius, non dicunt solam materiam, nec solam formam, sed utrumque. . . . Quelibet tamen forma universalis est consistens in essentia invariabili, quia variationes et transmutationes sunt circa singularia et non circa universalia, nisi per accidens."

[17] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de substantia*, 41, 20–42, 14; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum*, fol. d6vb: "Hec ergo est proprietas propria proprie substantie, scilicet quod sola substantia manens una et eadem numero est secundum sui mutationem contrariorum susceptiva et hec proprietas competit omni substantie uni secundum numerum et non alteri. Intelligendum quod hec proprietas dicitur propria proprie substantie, quia competit omni substantie prime existenti in genere substantie et soli substantie prime competit, quia substantia secunda non suscipit contrarium nisi per mutationem substantie prime."

## 2. *Burley's Views of Universals*[18]

In both his ontology and theory of knowledge, Burley attributes a prominent role to individuals.[19] Nevertheless, he considers an ontology that affirms the exclusive reality of individuals in the world and a merely conceptual mode of being of universals as deceitful. Therefore, according to him any view which holds that only singulars exist outside the soul and that species and genera and any universal whatsoever are concepts of the soul is false.[20] He counters this assumption with two fundamental theses: "First, something exists outside the soul which is not a singular. Second, not every universal is a concept of the soul."[21]

These theses are directed against any nominalist theory of universals and form the premises of Burley's own theories of universals. They clearly underpin a nonreductionist ontology and theory of universals. Burley's various considerations on this issue move in this direction. Yet, according to Alessandro Conti,[22] Burley's last theory of universals is a radical, somehow "Platonizing", version of the realism, while his first theory appears to be simply a form of the traditional moderate realism, slightly different from that defended by other authors such as Thomas Aquinas. According to Aquinas, universals exist *in potentia* outside the intellect and *in actu* within it. In Burley's earlier view, they exist *in actu* outside the intellect, since their being is the same as the being of individuals, which is actual.

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[18] On Burley's theory of universals see Mieczysław Markowski, "Die Anschauungen des Walter Burleigh über die Universalien," in *English Logic in Italy in the 14th and 15th Centuries*, ed. A. Maierù (Naples: 1982), 219–29; Markowski, "Johannes Buridans Polemik gegen die Universalienlehre des Walter Burleigh," *Mediaevalia Philosophica Polonorum* 26 (1982), 7–17; Elizabeth Karger, "Walter Burley's Realism," *Vivarium* 37.1 (1999), 24–40; and Hans-Ulrich Wöhler, "Nachwort: Walter Burleys Universalienkonzept," in Walter Burley, *Tractatus de universalibus*, ed. H.-U. Wöhler (Stuttgart: 1999), 71–82.

[19] On Burley's position on the problem of the cognition of individuals see Alessandro D. Conti, "La conoscenza del singolare in Walter Burley," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 15 (2004), 517–40, and on his theory of knowledge in general see Chapter Seven below, 225–246.

[20] See, for instance, Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis*, lib. I, fol. 8rb: "Sed illa opinio videtur esse falsa, quia ponit quod nihil est extra animam nisi singulare, et quod species et genera et omne universale est conceptus in anima."

[21] Ibid., fol. 8rb: "Prima 'conclusio' est quod aliquid est extra animam quod non est singulare. Secunda conclusio est quod non omne universale est conceptus anime."

[22] See Alessandro D. Conti, "Significato e verità in Walter Burley," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 11 (2000), 317–50, and Conti, "Walter Burley," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2011 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, available online at http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/burley/.

As a consequence, the intellect does not give actuality to universals, but only a separate mode of existence.

In his commentary on Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* (between 1297 and 1307), Burley distinguishes four possible meanings of the Latin word "*universale*": (1) the causal universal (*universale causalitate*), that is, those causes which have a multiplicity of effects, under which the first cause and (angelic) intelligences are classified; (2) that which is one in many and of many (i.e. the predicative—or formal—universal); (3) the modal universal, that is, universal propositions (*propositio universalis*), both affirmative and negative, such as "*omnis homo est animal*"; and (4) the ranking or level of those statements concerning the essence of things, which are universal in the sense of first in order (or primary—*primum*).[23] In his middle commentary on the *De interpretatione*, Burley speaks of mental universals (i.e. those concepts through which the intellect relates general names to their *significata*). Such mental universals are partially caused in our souls by common natures existing in individuals as constitutive parts of their essences.[24] On the contrary, in his commentary on the *Liber sex principiorum*, which is part of the last commentary on the *Ars vetus* (1337), he mentions the well-known partition of universals proposed by Albert the Great[25] into (1) *universale ante rem*, (2) *universale in re*, and (3) *universale post rem*, by which he understands (1) the ideas in the mind of God, (2) the common natures of things that actually exist in singular things, and (3) the general concepts in our intellect.[26] So, although he rejected outright the nominalist view of the exclusively mental nature of universals, he absolutely admitted as valid and true the view that there are also mental universals as distinct from real universals outside the soul. What is more, in his last commentary on the *Categories* (cap. *de priori*) and in the *Tractatus de universalibus*, the *Doctor planus et perspicuus* follows Auriol

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[23] See Burley, *Quaestiones super librum Posteriorum*, q. VII, 7.14, ed. Mary Catherine Sommers (Toronto: 2000), 101.

[24] See Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, in S.F. Brown, "Walter Burley's Middle Commentary on Aristotle's *Perihermeneias*," *Franciscan Studies* 33 (1973), 45–134, at 53–56.

[25] See Albert the Great, *Liber de universalibus*, in *Super Porphyrium. De V universalibus*, ed. S. Noya, in *Opera Omnia*, Tomus I, pars prima (Münster: 2004), cap. 3, 24.

[26] Burley, *Expositio super librum sex principiorum*, fol. h5ra: "Intelligendum est ulterius quod universale est triplex secundum dominum Albertum, scilicet ante rem, in re, et post rem. Universale ante rem est ratio producibilium rerum in deo, que a theologis idea dicitur. Universale in re est natura ipsa communis in singularibus actu recepta. Universale post rem est intentio universalitatis per actum intellectus abstrahentis causata et est posterius hoc universale his a quibus abstrahitur."

and the earlier Ockham in positing another mental universal, distinct from the act of understanding (the "standard" *post rem* conceptual universal), and existing in the mind only as its object (*habens esse obiectivum in intellectu*). By introducing this second mental universal, existing *obiective* in the intellect, Burley accounted for the fact that it is possible to grasp the meaning of a general noun even though we have not experienced any of the individuals it refers to, and thus without properly knowing by direct acquaintance the universal it primarily signifies.[27] Furthermore, in his commentary on the *Liber sex principiorum*, he names an intention of universality that comes about through the act of an abstracting intellect as an example of a *universale post rem*.[28] In the act of abstract cognition performed by the intellect can also be found one of the essential reasons for assuming the existence of mental universals. Burley even considered the statement that a universal is abstracted by the intellect from multiple singulars as well as from individuating conditions of being and material accidents as an *opinio communis*.[29]

While in his earlier works Burley does not support his main theses about universals with specific reasons (probably because his own position is a simple variation of the common opinion of his times), in his later writings (after Ockham's critique) many arguments are developed. Leaving aside the counterarguments he worked out against Ockham's criticisms (which are analyzed in the second chapter of this volume), some of his lines of reasoning are worth examining here.

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[27] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum*, fol. h1rb: "Unde licet universale non haberet esse existere extra animam, sicut dicunt moderni, tamen non est dubium quin secundum omnes universale habet esse obiective in intellectu. Potest enim intellectus intelligere leonem vel elephantem in universali non intelligendo istum leonem nec istum elephantem. Et eodem modo potest intellectus intelligere unum commune cuilibet tali propositioni, scilicet huic 'Deus est', prolate a me, et huic 'Deus est' prolate a Sorte, et sic de aliis." See also *Tractatus de universalibus*, cap. 6, 60–66. Here, he once again mentions such an interpretation of the being of universals. He also added arguments *pro* and *contra*, but does not state his definitive position. It is nevertheless likely that while rejecting the conceptual thesis that there are exclusively conceptual universals, he admitted as a debatable opinion the thesis of a specific mode of existence of universals as general terms or the contents of general statements in addition to their real extramental existence.

[28] Burley, *Expositio super librum sex principiorum*, fol. h5ra: "Universale post rem est intentio universalitatis per actum intellectus abstrahentis causata et est posterius hoc universale his ab quibus abstrahitur."

[29] Burley, *Tractatus de universalibus*, cap. 3, 20: "Item, in hoc conveniunt omnes quod universale abstrahitur per intellectum a singularibus et a conditionibus individuantibus et accidentibus materialibus."

The first argument in support of the first thesis runs as follows: "That which nature primarily strives towards is not a singular; but that which nature primarily strives towards exists outside the soul; therefore something exists outside the soul that is not a singular."[30]

The premise for this argument is based on a concrete and immediately intelligible empirical fact: in natural causal relationships that occur in the inanimate world there are regular processes that do not involve a change of direction, such as is sometimes the case in the process of choosing or avoiding something, so that the results of such causal relationships, despite their individual differences, are identical in belonging to one and the same species of effect and thus primarily the species of effect, and not each individual effect, characterizes the effect of natural forces.[31]

A second argument in support of the first thesis is as follows: the consumption of food and liquids by people or animals to satisfy feelings of hunger or thirst in order to survive answers a natural need in each living thing; however, satisfying hunger or thirst does not depend exclusively on just certain foods or liquids, but also occurs regardless of the individuality of these means and also regardless of whether these means are known by the hungry or thirsty person or animal; thus it follows that something other than a singular, and something which exists outside the soul, is desired by the hungry or thirsty person or animal.[32]

A third argument in support of the first thesis is the following: many times, sales and purchases of goods, gifts, or even contractual agreements concerning goods and money transactions do not concern singular objects, but, more in general, sorts or types of objects; thus something exists outside the soul which is not a singular and which is nevertheless the real object of these transactions. For instance, when a person promises *a horse* to another man, it is the universal-horse and not a singular one which is promised, since the promise can be fulfilled by giving any singular horse whatsoever, that is, one instantiation whatsoever of the type horse.[33]

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[30] Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis*, lib. I, fol. 8rb: "Illud quod natura primo intendit, non est singulare; sed illud quod natura primo intendit est aliquid extra animam; ergo aliquid est extra animam quod non est singulare."

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid., fol. 8rb–vb—see Stephen Read, "'I promise a penny that I do not promise.' The Realist/Nominalist Debate over Intensional Propositions in 14th Century British Logic and its Contemporary Relevance," in *The Rise of British Logic*, ed. Osmund P. Lewry (Toronto: 1985), 335–59.

To back up his second thesis that universals have not only conceptual being, Burley deduces a series of logical contradictions from the hypothesis of the negation of the thesis he wants to prove. He also invokes an ontological argument: the assumption of a purely conceptual mode of being for universals would separate these from the being of singular things; but such a consequence is neither compatible with the writings of Aristotle nor with those of Averroes.[34]

Moreover, in his last commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*, Burley puts forward another reason for there being something real outside the soul that is not a singular thing, once again directly invoking Aristotle and Averroes. He is concerned here with the relationship between cause and effect following the principle that there are not only individual causes and effects, but universal ones too. He cites sculpture as an example: the sculptor in general (*artifex in universali acceptus*) must be considered the real cause of the statue in general (*statua in universali accepta*), which therefore must be considered its real effect.[35]

In his last commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*, Burley resorts to another argument to reinforce his objection to the position of nominalists:[36] according to the second chapter of the *Categories*, everything which is said of a subject and is not in a subject is a universal substance; and everything which is not in a subject is something which exists outside the soul, otherwise it would be in a subject (that is, in the soul). If the sole concepts were universal, every universal would be in the soul; as a consequence, against Aristotle, there would not be anything in the world which could

[34] See Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis*, lib. I, fol. 9ra: "Item, si conceptus in anima in esse separentur a singularibus existentibus in re; ergo si universalia non essent nisi conceptus in anima, sequitur quod universalia essent in esse separata a singularibus, cuius contrarium volunt Philosophus et Commentator."

[35] Ibid., lib. II, fol. 47ra: "Unde notandum quod ex isto loco apparet quod extra animam est res alia quam singularis, quia artifex in universali acceptus est vera causa realis et statua in universali accepta est vera et realiter quoddam causatum, ut volunt Philosophus et Commentator hic; et sic non dependent ab anima; igitur etc. Dicit igitur Commentator hic quod statua huius hominis est causatum propinquum, sed statua simpliciter est causatum remotum; sed certum est quod utraque, id est statua huius hominis et statua simpliciter, est res extra animam; ergo."

[36] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum*, fol. c6ra: "Illud, quod dicitur de subiecto et non est in subiecto, est universale de genere substantie; sed omne ens non existens in subiecto est extra animam, quia si esset in anima, esset in subiecto; et per consequens est extra animam. Unde si nihil esset universale nisi vox vel conceptus, sequeretur quod omne universale esset in subiecto, et per consequens nihil esset illud, quod dicitur de subiecto et non est in subiecto."

be said of a subject without being in a subject. Two important conclusions follow from this textual argument:[37]

> Two irreconcilable differences with the assertions of the *moderni* follow here. The first is that universals belonging to the category of substance exist outside the soul. The second irreconcilable difference with the Nominalists' position consists in the fact that any proposition is composed of things that are outside the soul. For that which is said of a subject and is not present in a subject is predicated in a proposition; and it is a thing existing outside the soul.[38]

These arguments adduced by Burley are directed against the reductionist kind of ontology proper to the Ockhamist theory of universals. The *Doctor planus et perspicuus* holds that reality, which is independent of human thought and knowledge, essentially contains both individual and universal things. For this reason the transcendental concept of *thing* (*res*) is a sort of metaconcept which signifies and refers to both individual and general (i.e. universal) objects, simply viewed as really existing (so and so) beings.[39] Indeed, in Burley's opinion, such universals are primarily universal substances (i.e. the genera and species of substance), but, in addition to universal substances (the so-called secondary substances), he also recognizes the universal accidents (*accidentia universalia*), whose general definition is that they are said of a subject and are present in a subject.[40] In his commentary on Aristotle's *De anima*, his *quaestiones* on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, and his *Tractatus de universalibus*,[41] the *Doctor planus et perspicuus* divides universals into three different groups depending upon

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[37] Ibid.: "Hic apparent duo contraria dictis modernorum. Primum est quod universalia de genere substantie sunt extra animam. Secundum contrarium modernis est, quod propositio componitur ex rebus extra animam. Nam id quod dicitur de subiecto et non est in subiecto predicatur in propositione; et illud est res extra animam."

[38] The thesis of the existence in the external world of *real propositions* which are what true sentences signify has been interpreted in many different ways by Burley's scholars. It is extensively discussed elsewhere in this volume (see in particular Chapter Three: "Meaning and Truth," 87–133), so it is not necessary to review its details here.

[39] See Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis*, lib. I, fol. 9va: "Dico igitur quod hoc commune, homo, et Sortes sunt due res, quia istud prerogativum habet terminus transcendens, scilicet quod potest distribui tam pro universalibus quam pro individuis et etiam potest numerari tam in universalia quam in individua"; and *Expositio super librum Perihermeneias Aristotelis*, fol. l5rb: "Secundo potest notari quod extra animam est aliqua res universalis et aliqua singularis. Patet hoc per divisionem rerum."

[40] See Burley, *Expositio vetus super librum Praedicamentorum*, 64.

[41] See Burley, *Expositio libri De anima*, fols. 9ra–11ra; *Quaestiones octo super logicam in communi necnon super Porphyrii Isagogen* (henceforth: *Quaestiones super Porphyrium*), Wroclaw, BU, MS IV.Q.IV, fol. 123va; and *Tractatus de universalibus*, cap. 3, 20.

the mode of existence appropriate to each: (1) universals with exclusive reference to extramental individuals (*supposita extra animam; singularia existentia extra animam*), such as man, stone, and wood; (2) universals with exclusive reference to mental individuals (*supposita in anima; singularia existentia in anima*), such as knowledge, grammar, and art; and (3) Universals with a twofold reference to both extramental and mental individuals (*supposita in anima et extra animam; singularia in anima et extra animam*), such as habits and dispositions. As a matter of fact, of particular importance within the universal accidents are the qualities, and within these qualitative universals the most important is, in turn, the first species of quality (*prima species qualitatis*), that is, habits and dispositions, because (as Burley explains) all the primary basic but nonessential properties of a substance belong to it.[42] In Burley's opinion, these universal qualitative forms are unchanging entities in which the individual qualities participate in the same mode.[43] This view appears to express a sort of Platonic element within Burley's theory of universals: the idea of participation (*participatio*) of individuals (i.e. of singular qualities), in the universal abstract forms, considered as unchanging self-identical entities.

As a convinced Aristotelian who rejected a two-world theory (i.e. the autonomy of the universal vis-à-vis the singular in the sense of the Platonic Ideas), Burley was obliged to explain how universals and individuals really exist in combination. He adheres after all to the principle that universals cannot exist on their own, but only in singulars.[44] As it has been stressed,[45] in his middle and last commentaries on the *Categories*, Burley restates the Aristotelian idea (*Categories* 5, 2a35–2b6) that if primary substances did not exist, it would be impossible for anything else to exist, as everything else depends on them for its own actual being. This was possible since the *Doctor planus et perspicuus* thought that universals as well as abstract accidents were forms, and, as a consequence, entities

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[42] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum*, fol. f4va.

[43] See ibid., fol. g1ra: "Tamen mihi videtur quod nulla qualitas in abstracto suscipiat magis et minus. Et hec est sententia Porphyrii, ubi ponit differentiam inter speciem et accidens, ubi dicit quod tam accidens separabile quam inseparabile suscipit magis et minus, sed nulla species recipit magis et minus. Omnis enim species qualitatis equaliter participatur a suis individuis, et ita una iustitia non dicitur magis iustitia quam alia, nec una sanitas dicitur magis sanitas quam alia."

[44] See for instance Burley, *De puritate artis logicae. Tractatus longior*, ed. Ph. Boehner (New York: 1955), pars I, 14: "Universale non potest existere per se nec per consequens potest reddi nisi in aliquo singulari."

[45] See Conti, "Categories and Universals in the Later Middle Ages," 384–85; Conti, "Ockham and Burley on Categories and Universals: a Comparison," 187 and 195–96.

existentially incomplete, demanding the existence of at least one individual substance for being *in actu*.

It must be noted in this regard that, according to Burley, the term "form" has several meanings. Referring to Avicenna in the commentary on the *Liber sex principiorum*, he distinguishes between five possible *significata* of this term: (1) intelligences, or separated substances; (2) those forms which are the constitutive element, together with matter, of the material substances; (3) form as the manifestation of bodies measured according to their state of perfection (e.g. health as form of the body); (4) form as a peculiar external shape of bodies, both animate and inanimate; (5) the species, genera, and specific differences of something (i.e. forms as universal natures).[46] Among these five kinds of forms, those which are at stake here are the second and the fifth, that is, the individual (substantial) form which informs matter and, with it, gives origin to the individual substances, and the universal forms which bring the specific nature of things about.[47] According to Burley, who follows Albert the Great,[48] the universal form should be understood as *the* form of the entire composite (*forma totius*). This form is present in any individual (which is composed of singular matter and form) as the main constitutive element of its essence. It encompasses the individual form and matter in equal measure. It represents the unchanging essential properties of things.[49] The universal form is itself not capable of being perceived by the senses;

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[46] Burley, *Expositio super librum sex principiorum*, fol. h3ra: "Avicenna . . . ponit quinque modos forme. Uno modo, dicitur forma ipsa intelligentia, que effectui est aptata ut agat; et sic substantie separate dicuntur forme subsistentes et exemplares. Secundo modo, dicitur forma illud per quod constituitur materia in effectu et in esse; et hoc modo substantie intelligibiles et accidentia etiam sunt forme. Tertio modo, dicitur forma illud, per quod perficitur materia, quamvis non constituatur per id in effectu et in esse, sicut est sanitas et quicquid est ad quod res movetur naturaliter. Quarto modo, dicitur forma proprie figura et quicquid aliud fit in materia per artificium. Qinto modo, dicitur forma species rei, genus etiam et differentia; et sic patet quod forma potest accipi pro universali et materia pro individuo."

[47] Ibid., fol. h3rb: "Forma dividitur in formam universalem, que terminat quiditatem speciei, et in formam particularem, que est forma materie."

[48] See Albert the Great, *Liber de universalibus*, in *Super Porphyrium. De V universalibus*, cap. 8, 37–38.

[49] Ibid.: "Supponendo igitur quod forma hic diffinita est forma universalis, est hec diffinitio manifesta. Et enim forma compositioni contingens, id est adveniens composito ex materia et forma, id est individuo substantie. . . . Et forma universalis quelibet, ut humanitas et animalitas, cum sint forme totius, non dicunt solam materiam nec solam formam, sed utrumque. . . . Quelibet tamen forma universalis est consistens in essentia invariabili, quia variationes et transmutationes sunt circa singularia et non circa universalia, nisi per accidens."

it can only be grasped by the intellect.[50] Thus the universal is interpreted in the sense of a nature (or collection of essential properties) common to a certain set of individuals (i.e. as a common immanent form of these individuals). Burley's exposition here effectively amounts to equating the essential nature of individuals, their universal form, and universal substances with one another. This relationship of presence of universals in individuals is expressed semantically through the absolute simple and comparative simple suppositions (*suppositio simplex absoluta* and *suppositio simplex comparata*). In fact, a common (or general) term has absolute simple supposition when in a sentence it stands absolutely for that which it signifies, namely a universal form, considered precisely insofar as this form is present in independently existing individuals which instantiate it (*supposita*). Whereas a common term, on the other hand, has comparative simple supposition when in a sentence it stands for that which it signifies considered insofar as it is predicated of the individuals which instantiate it.[51] As a consequence, the general definition of a universal adopted by Burley is that a universal is that which is present in many things and is said of many things (*est in multis et dicitur de multis*).[52]

The thesis that the universal form is *the* form of the entire composite (*forma totius*) once again begs the question of how the individual and the universal are related to each other, if the universal form is added to an individual but at the same time determines its unchanging essence. Both of them appear to belong together, and yet they also appear to be clearly distinct from each other.

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[50] Ibid., fol. h5rb: "Forme insensibiles sunt que per rationem comprehenduntur, ut disciplina. Etiam forme que dicuntur de subiecto sunt insensibiles cum sint universales."

[51] Burley, *De puritate artis logicae*, pars I, 11: "Suppositio simplex absoluta est, quando terminus communis supponit absolute pro suo significato, ut est in suppositis. Suppositio simplex comparata est, quando terminus communis supponit pro suo significato, secundum quod praedicatur de suppositis." On the relationship between the theory of universals and the theory of supposition in Burley see Michael F. Wagner, "Supposition-Theory and the Problem of Universals," *Franciscan Studies* 41 (1981), 385–414.

[52] Ibid.: "Universale seu terminus communis habet duas conditiones secundum Philosophum, quia est in multis et dicitur de multis"; see also the *De suppositionibus*, ed. Stephen F. Brown, *Franciscan Studies* 32 (1972), 36: "Quoniam universale habet duas condiciones: una eius condicio est esse in multis et alia dici de multis"; and *Middle Commentary on Aristotle's Perihermeneias*, ed. Stephen F. Brown, *Franciscan Studies* 33 (1973), 85: "Universale est quod est aptum natum praedicari de pluribus et singulare quod non est natum praedicari de pluribus sed de uno solo. Intelligendum quod illud dicitur universale cui ex natura formae suae non repugnat reperiri in pluribus, etsi ex parte materiae impossibile sit ipsum in pluribus reperiri. . . . Et sic dico quod ad hoc quod aliquid sit universale requiritur quod illud conveniat pluribus sicut res communis pluribus; nec sufficit quod conveniat pluribus sicut vox significans plura."

### 3. *The Relationship between Individuals and Universals*

The theoretical basis of Burley's original main theses on realism mentioned above—(1) universal substances really exist outside the soul; (2) a proposition is composed of things that are outside the soul—is also found in this dual character of universals as semantic and ontological items connected with individuals. As an interpreter and faithful follower of Aristotelian philosophy, Burley was obliged to reconcile the assumption that there are real universals such as the genera and species of things with the often repeated demand of Aristotle that universals of substance could not be separated as independent entities and exist independently from individuals. In different periods of his long career, he described the relationship between individuals and universals (i.e. genera, species, and differences) in two different ways. Initially he solved this problem by regarding universals as internal constituents of individuals. In his commentary on Aristotle's *De anima* he maintains that universal substances have being in their own singulars. According to him, Socrates is not only made up of singular matter and form, but of singular matter, singular form, and of any universal predicated *in quid* of him.[53] In his *quaestiones* on Aristotle's *Perihermeneias* too, he had defined a universal as a quidditative part (*pars quidditativa*) of an individual, that is, as a constituent of the common essence of a thing.[54]

Burley later abandoned this view of a universal as a constituent of the singular in response to Ockham's criticisms. However, he did not renounce his main thesis of the reality of universal substances and accidents existing outside our intellect. There is no sign in Burley's works prior to 1324 that he considered Ockham as an adversary, but beginning with the prologue to his last commentary on the *Physics* his main writings always feature an analysis of Ockham's views together with a serious attempt to disprove his theses and confute his arguments.[55] For instance, in the last commentary on *Physics*,[56] he argues that the principle holds

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[53] See Burley, *Expositio libri de anima*, fol. 11ra—the passage is quoted above, note 6.

[54] See Burley, *Quaestiones in Librum Perihermeneias*, ed. Stephen F. Brown, *Franciscan Studies* 34 (1974), 213: "Ad primum in contrarium dicendum quod res significata per 'homo' est pars quidditativa et totum universale Sortis. . . . Concedo quod natura speciei est una pars Sortis."

[55] See Conti, "Walter Burley," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2011 Edition).

[56] See Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis*, lib. I, fol. 9rb: "Ad tertium dico quod quamvis universale sit res extra animam, tamen non est pars individui, quia effectus particularis sunt

that causes must be proportionate to the effects they produce. As a consequence, the causes of an individual must be individual, while those of a universal must be universal. Therefore, individual substances cannot be compounded by something universal; on the contrary, universals must be composed of genus and specific difference. Hence the species is not a constitutive part of the individuals it is present in. In his last commentary on the *Categories*[57] too and in the later *Tractatus de universalibus*, he rejected the thesis that universals are (metaphysical) parts of individuals.[58] For Burley, genus and difference must be viewed as the constitutive real (metaphysical) components of quiddity.[59] This thesis that a genus and a difference in the sense of constituents of a definition or a quiddity are real things distinct from each other is a further main thesis in Burley's form of realism. Just as the other two main theses previously mentioned, it is aimed directly at the opposing view of the nominalists (the *moderni*).[60] This thesis underlines the metaphysical dimension of Burley's discourse on universals and individuals.

Yet despite renouncing this thesis according to which a universal is part of an individual, Burley continued to address the problem of how individuals and universals relate to one another if they cannot be separated as two independent entities. In other words, the issue is how to determine a relationship between two sides which are distinct from one another but

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cause particulares. Et sic dico quod quamvis genus sit pars speciei, tamen species non est pars individui, quia individuum sufficienter constituitur ex causis particularibus."

[57] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum*, fol. d3rb: "Ad aliud dicendum quod non oportet quod annihilando individuum annihiletur species hominis, quia species hominis non est pars Sortis." See also the *Expositio super librum Perihermeneias Aristotelis*, fol. m6va: "Et ita probabile est ponere extra animam universale aliud a quolibet singulari suo."

[58] See Burley, *Tractatus de universalibus*, cap. 3, 20–22: "Et sic ponentes dicunt quod universale, tam illud, quod est in anima, quam illud quod est extra animam, est alia res distincta a re singulari, in qua existit"; 40: "Et cum dicitur, quod si Deus annihilaret Sortem, destruet speciem hominis, dico quod non sequitur, quia ut dictum fuit, species non est pars individui." See also *Quaestiones super Porphyrium*, fols. 127vb–129ra: "Primo ergo declarabo quod universale est alia res a singulari."

[59] See Burley, *Quaestiones super librum Posteriorum*, q. VII, 7.111, 123: "Unde species constituitur uno modo constitutione metaphysicali et sic constituitur ex partibus quidditativis, ut ex genere et differentia."

[60] See Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis*, lib. I, fol. 10ra: "Notanda sunt hic duo. Primo quod substantia diffinibilis componitur ex genere et differentia et dividitur in genus et differentiam tamquam in partes essentiales; et quod genus et differentia sint res diverse. Ex quibus apparet manifeste secundum intentionem Philosophi et Commentatoris quod genus et differentia, que cadunt in diffinitione substantie, sunt substantie, et quod species componitur compositione vera ex genere et differentia tamquam ex partibus realibus realiter diversis, cuius tamen contrarium dicunt moderni."

which are at the same time in a reciprocal relationship. His argument for a new solution to this problem begins by distinguishing two different meanings for the terms "quiddity" (*quidditas*) and "form" (*forma*), each of which depends on distinct functions of the forms: either "form" signifies that form which perfects matter (*forma perficiens materiam*), or that form which discloses quiddity (*forma declarans quiditatem*). The form which perfects matter is a constituent of the individual to which it belongs; the form which discloses quiddity is not a constituent of the individual, but merely an essential form present in the individual (*forma essentialiter concomitans essentiam eius*).[61] Thus the relationship of a universal to an individual is that of *concomitantia* (i.e. the universal is an essential attribute of the individual which is not identical to the individual itself ). Universals and individuals therefore really correspond to one another; however, they are really distinct, since they are each constituted by means of their own constituents of being. This also explains the truthfulness of the statements that any species present in distinct individuals is the same thing (*res*), more precisely the same nature or common essence, in all of them, and that contrary properties may be attributed to this nature at the same time without violating the principle of contradiction. As it has been explained,[62] specific and generic natures are not multiplied by their being present in many different individuals at once, since they are not one and the same in number. So, for instance, the form of humanity is one and the same in each man, but not in number, as, taken by itself, it is defined in the same way in all of them.[63]

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[61] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum*, fol. d3rb: "Ad illud quando probatur quod species est pars individui, quia est quidditas individui, dicendum quod quidditas et forma unum sunt; et ideo sicut forma est duplex, scilicet forma declarans quidditatem et forma perficiens materiam, sic quidditas est duplex, quia quedam est quidditas, que est forma perficiens materiam, et quedam est forma declarans quidditatem. Quidditas que est forma perficiens materiam est pars individui cuius est quiditas; sed quidditas declarans quidditatem non est pars individui cuius est quidditas, nec est de essentia talis individui, sed est essentialiter concomitans essentiam eius." See also *De formis*, 45; and *Expositio super Porphyrii Isagogen*, fol. a3ra.

[62] See Conti, "Ockham and Burley on Categories and Universals: a Comparison," 194.

[63] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum*, fol. d3rb–d3va: "Ad quintum principale, cum dicitur an hec species, homo, sit eadem omnino res in Sorte et Platone, an alia et alia, dicendum quod hec species, homo, est eadem in Sorte et Platone. Et cum dicitur quod eadem esset res hic et Rome, et simul moveretur et quiesceret, dicendum quod hec species, homo, est una res secundum speciem et non est inconveniens quod eadem res secundum speciem sit hic et Rome, et simul moveatur et requiescat." See also the *Tractatus de universalibus*, cap. 3, 32–34.

In other words, a universal in Burley's later theory is not part of an individual, yet it is just as real as an individual and joined with individuals in a specific manner. Individuals and universals cannot be equated with one another either. Accordingly, there is a relationship of real distinction between individuals and universal substances. This thesis represents the main and most original thesis in Burley's version of realism. The evidence brought forward by Burley in support of this thesis makes use of a number of logical and epistemological arguments. In his *quaestiones* on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, he first draws upon the principle of identity and difference: there is identity between two things *a* and *b* if and only if for any property *P* it is the case that *P* is predicated of *a* if and only if it is predicated of *b*; and there is real difference whenever this is not the case. He equally follows the law of contradiction, which he also wants to use to examine the identity or difference of objects. According to these principles there is no identity between universals and individuals,[64] because the property of being apt to be said of many things pertains to universals but not to individuals, to which the opposite property (the impossibility to be said of many things) pertains. Burley also employs similar arguments in the *Tractatus de universalibus*.[65] In addition to what he previously mentioned, he also specifies that:

- A universal can be defined; a singular cannot.[66]
- A universal can be divided by contrary differences; a singular cannot.[67]
- General properties form the basis of the real comparison between individuals in terms of their agreement with or difference from one another; in contrast, individual properties cannot have this function.[68]
- In the strictest sense of the word, the expression "numerically one" or "numerically identical" applies only to individuals and not to universals.[69]

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[64] See Burley, *Quaestiones super Porphirium*, fols. 127vb–128ra.

[65] See Burley, *Tractatus de universalibus*, cap. 3, 20–40.

[66] See ibid., 22: "Universale diffinitur; sed nullum singulare diffinitur, ut patet ex septimo *Metaphysice*; ergo etc."

[67] See ibid.: "Item, universale, ut genus, dividitur per differencias contrarias, ut animal per racionale et irracionale; sed nullum singulare dividitur per hiusmodi differencias; ergo etc."

[68] See ibid., 28: "Ergo oportet quod illud, in quo comparantur, conveniat utrique; sed nullum singulare competit utrique; ergo est aliqua res universalis, in qua illa, que realiter comparantur, comparantur ad invicem."

[69] See ibid., 34: "Sed accipiendo unum numero stricte, secundum quod distinguitur contra unum genere et unum specie, sic unum numero distinguitur contra quodcumque

– The proofs and definitions of the real sciences (metaphysics, physics, mathematics, meteorology etc.) principally and directly refer to really existing universals, but not to singulars.[70]

But just as Burley distanced himself from a reductionist and nominalist ontology, he distanced himself from the conception of universals as autonomous and independent entities as well.[71] He attributes this concept to Plato and devotes an entire chapter (Chapter 4) of his *Tractatus de universalibus* to a critique of this type of realism.[72] Here he sets out to demonstrate, citing Aristotle in support, that ensuring the reality and presence of universals in the world does not entail their being separated entities in the Platonic sense. In fact, the latter assumption would imply a series of insurmountable contradictions. It can be seen from this approach that Burley has developed his universal realism and his doctrine of the real distinction between universals and individuals strictly on the basis of Aristotelian philosophy, including the critique of the Platonic Ideas. In this context, universals represent a specific way of ordering individuals according to their essential properties and relationships. Burley identifies the main factors of a stable order in the hidden actions of God and nature.[73] Yet specific universals and individuals also characterize the material culture of mankind. Therefore Burley postulates not only natural, but also artificial universals, and natural and artificial universals in

commune. Et sic unum vel idem numero idem est quod individuum, cuius intellectui repugnat in pluribus reperiri, cuiusmodi est Sortes vel Plato. Et isto modo nullum universale est est unum numero."

[70] Ibid., 16–18; see also the *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum*, fol. d2vb: "Si ergo nihil sit substantia nisi substantia singularis, sequitur quod nulla est scientia de substantia, et sic destrueretur metaphysica, que est de substantiis insensibilibus et de substantiis eternis. Item, destrueretur scientia de naturalibus, que est de substantiis mobilibus, quia nulla esset sciencia nisi de conceptibus in anima." For Burley, the reality and capacity to know the objects of the real sciences could only be guaranteed on the basis of a reality of the universal.

[71] See, for instance, Burley, *Questiones super Porphyrium*, fol. 123va: "Cuius ratio est ista: universale non est in esse separatum; <sed> est aliquid unum distinctum per has differentias."

[72] See Burley, *Tractatus de universalibus*, cap. 4, 40–46.

[73] See Burley, *Expositio super librum sex principiorum*, fol. h5ra: "Sicut ergo natura creata latenter operatur in istis inferioribus, quia experimur in nobis quod nutrimur et augemur, quomodo tamen agat ad nutritionem et augmentationem ignoramus, sicut natura increata, scilicet Deus agit latenter et subtiliter in illam naturam, quia stabilivit omnia naturalia in numero determinato et mensura, ut dictum est."

combination with each other.[74] In his view, therefore, universals embody the order in the world which, although it is not directly perceptible by the senses, is absolutely knowable intellectually.

## 4. *Conclusion*

If the preceding analyses are correct, Walter Burley's final position on the problem of the existence and nature of universals and individuals can be summarized in four main theses:

1. Species and genera of individuals, both substantial and accidental, really exist outside the soul.
2. A relationship of real distinction holds between individuals and universals.
3. The constituents of the lowest species (i.e. the genus and specific difference) are real and distinct things from one another.
4. That which is signified by an affirmative true proposition is an *ens copulatum* composed of things that exist outside the soul and a relation (signified by the copula) which holds between them.

These theses are aimed against any nominalist theory of universals. In fact, in his view, a reduction of universals to mental signs could no longer achieve the purpose of explaining and making sure the possibility itself and the universal validity of our knowledge of the world. He thought that only on the ground of a close isomorphism between language and world could the signifying power of terms and statements be ensured. All of his discussions reveal a large degree of awareness of this problem. So, according to Burley, the general property of universals, whether substantial or accidental, consists in the capacity to be said of many and be present in many. But while the most important feature of his early ontology is his claim that the being of universals is the same as the being of

[74] Ibid., fol. h5ra: "Ulterius est sciendum quod quedam sunt universalia que predicantur solum de singularibus factis ab arte. Et talia universalia solum fiunt ab arte; nam ab eodem fit universale a quo fit singulare, cuiusmodi est illud universale, domus. Et quedam sunt universalia que solummodo predicantur de singularibus factis a natura, cuiusmodi est hoc universale, homo. Et talia solum fiunt a natura. Et quedam sunt universalia que predicantur de singularibus factis a natura et ab arte. Et talia universalia indifferenter fiunt a natura et ab arte." See also ibid., fol. h4va–b; and *De Deo, natura et arte*, ed. H. Shapiro, Mediaevalia et Humanistica 15 (1963), 89–90.

their individuals, after Ockham's critique had showed that the traditional realist description of the relation between universals and individuals was untenable, he repeatedly emphasizes in his works that universals exist in individuals and are really different from them—even though they do not possess a separate kind of existence from individuals, like Platonic Ideas. His analysis therefore remains consistently within the parameters of Aristotelian philosophy. A real distinction between universals and individuals was the only possible strategy for formulating a revised form of realism, given the fact that, like Ockham, the "last" Burley rejected any kind of distinction in addition to the real one—as he considered identity a transitive, symmetrical, and reflexive relation, and identity and difference two mutually incompatible relations.[75] The *Doctor planus et perspicuus* was convinced that Ockham's objections had been sufficient to show that the traditional realist account of the relationship between universals and individuals was unacceptable. Therefore, he developed a new realist form of ontology, which Conti has described as an ontology of the macro-objects.[76] A macro-object is what is signified by a proper name (such as "Socrates") or a definite description (such as "this man here"). It is the basic component of the world, but it is not a substance, neither primary nor secondary. It rather is an aggregates made up of a singular substance and all the universal substantial forms and the accidental forms present in it. Individual substances and substantial and accidental forms are simple categorial items. Singular substance differs from the other components of a macro-object because the other categorial items—even if they are really distinct from primary substance—as forms necessarily presuppose it for their existence. Hence the macro-object cannot be considered identical with a primary substance, but it is an orderly collection of categorial items. Primary substance, while it is the most important element of the macro-object, does not contain its complete being.

Although Burley's version of realism has often been classified as extreme realism, many parallels to the moderate universal realism of Robert Grosseteste, Albert the Great, and John Duns Scotus can also be found in his discussions. Particularly the strict demarcation from Platonic realism as well as the emphasis on a strict correspondence of individuals and universals allow his concept to be allocated to the tradition of

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[75] See Burley, *Tractatus de universalibus*, cap. 3, 22.

[76] See Conti, "Ontology in Walter Burley's Last Commentary on the *Ars vetus*," 121–76, *passim*; "Walter Burley," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2011 Edition); and "Ockham and Burley on Categories and Universals: a Comparison," 200–01.

moderate universal realism in medieval philosophy. However, he developed his own original conception within this current of thought which is distinct from previous theories of universals. Some of his contemporaries (e.g. William of Ockham and John Buridan) dealt with his ideas at length, as did later Scholastic philosophers and theologians (e.g. John Wyclif,[77] Robert Alyngton,[78] Paul of Venice[79]). The main period of influence of his concept was in the 14th and 15th centuries. In the later Middle Ages, his last commentary on the *Ars vetus* and the *Tractatus de universalibus* in particular existed in a number of manuscripts and in several printed editions. This suggests a sustained interest by philosophers and theologians of the period in Burley's logico-metaphysical views. In the later Middle Ages, his peculiar form of realism (of universals) was above all modified and to some extent replaced by the apparently more traditional views of John Wyclif.[80]

The analyses of contemporary scholars reveal the complexity of Burley's main ideas on individuals and universals. They show, on the one hand, the direct connection of his theories with the discussions of predecessors and contemporaries, but, on the other hand, the absolute novelty of his final position. They make it clear that Walter Burley is one of the most interesting and highly influential figures within the medieval debate on semantics and ontology.

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[77] On the relationship between Burley's theory of universals and that of Wyclif see Paul Vincent Spade, "The Problem of Universals and Wyclif's Alleged 'Ultrarealism'," *Vivarium* 43.1 (2005), 111–23; and Alessandro D. Conti, "Wyclif's Logic and Metaphysics," in *A Companion to John Wyclif, Late Medieval Theologian*, ed. Ian C. Levy (Leiden: 2006), 67–125.

[78] On Alyngton's logico-metaphysical theory considered in its relation to Burley's see Alessandro D. Conti, "A Realist Interpretation of the *Categories* in the Fourteenth Century: the *Litteralis Sententia super Praedicamenta Aristotelis* of Robert Alyngton," in *Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Categories*, ed. Newton, 317–46.

[79] See Alessandro D. Conti, "Alcune note sulla *Expositio super universalia Porphyrii et artem veterem Aristotelis* di Paolo Veneto: analogie e differenze con i corrispondenti commenti di Walter Burley," in *English Logic in Italy in the 14th and 15th Centuries*, ed. Maierù, 293–303.

[80] On late medieval reactions to Burley's logico-metaphysical thought see below, Chapter Thirteen, "14th-Century Reactions to Burley," 377–409.

CHAPTER SIX

# BURLEY'S THEORIES OF CATEGORIES

Alessandro D. Conti

In this chapter a systematic and comparative exposition of Burley's two slightly different doctrines of categories will be offered. As is well known, because of Ockham's criticisms of the traditional realist conceptions, Burley modified his general position about universals and categories during his career.[1] Leaving aside his first set of commentaries on the *Ars vetus*,[2] which are very short and philosophically unpretentious, in his middle commentary on the *Categories* (written before 1309) Burley does not hold up the same theses which characterize his final radically realist ontology, but different ones, consistent with the canons of the so-called "moderate realism". He maintains that only the three absolute categories (substance, quantity, and quality) are really things in the strictest sense of the term, and considers the remaining ones as real aspects (*respectus reales*) of the absolute ones. Moreover, he affirms that universals have being in their own individuals, as constitutive parts of their essence. In contrast, in his last commentary on the *Categories* (completed in 1337), he supports the theses of a real distinction between universals and individuals and among the ten Aristotelian categories, which he now regards as properly things.

In the *Categories* Aristotle sketches the main features of his (earlier) metaphysics and semantics, as he sets out the basic elements of the world (individual and universal substances, individual and universal accidents) in their mutual relationships, and shows their connection with language and thought. Unfortunately, Aristotle did not clarify whether the division into categories is first of all a partition of things made on the basis of ontological criteria and only secondarily a classification of (mental, written,

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[1] See A.D. Conti, "Ontology in Walter Burley's Last Commentary on the *Ars vetus*," *Franciscan Studies* 50 (1990), 121–76; and Conti, "Ockham and Burley on Categories and Universals: a Comparison," *The Modern Schoolman* 86.1–2 (2008–09), 181–210. See also Chapter Two, above, 49–84.

[2] They have been edited by M. von Perger, "Walter Burley's *Expositio vetus super librum Porphyrii*. An edition," *Franciscan Studies* 59 (2001), 237–69; and "Walter Burley's *Expositio vetus super librum Praedicamentorum*. An Edition," *Franciscan Studies* 61 (2003), 55–95.

and spoken) terms, or vice versa.[3] Moreover, the *Categories* is not only an ambiguous, but also a composite text. Thereby, it is not surprising that the ten categories and their mutual distinctions were among the most disputed topics in late ancient and medieval philosophical literature.[4] Four main doctrinal bodies can be individuated in it:

The categorial doctrine properly said (Chapter 4) and its semantic entailments and presuppositions (Chapters 1 and 4).

A theory of substance, where the Stagirite states a threefold distinction: between substance and accidents; between individuals and universals; and between two different types of predication (that is, two different types of relations between the basic items of the world): the being in something as a subject (or accidental predication) and the being-said-of-something-as-a-subject (or essential predication) (Chapters 2, 3, and 5).[5] This theory culminates in the ontological primacy of individual substances over any other kind of being (Chapter 5).

The regional ontologies, about the foremost categorial fields after substance (Chapters 6–9). This group of doctrines consists of physical and metaphysical theories of quantity (Chapter 6), relatives (*pros ti*—Chapter 7), quality (Chapter 8), action, and passion (Chapter 9, incomplete). There Aristotle roughly describes the items falling into these categorial fields, and supplies preliminary lists of them.

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[3] See J.L. Ackrill, *Aristotle's Categories and De interpretatione*, translated with notes by J.L. Ackrill (Oxford: 1963), 80–81.

[4] On the history of the concept of category see H.M. Baumgarten et al., "Kategorie," in *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, ed. J. Ritter and K. Grünger, vol. 4 (Darmstadt: 1976), 714–76.

[5] On Aristotle's theory of predication see: D.W. Hamlyn, "Aristotle on Predication," *Phronesis* 6 (1961), 110–26; G.E.L. Owen, "Inherence," *Phronesis* 10 (1965), 97–105; J.M.E. Moravcsik, "Aristotle on Predication," *Philosophical Review* 76 (1967), 80–96; J. Duerlinger, "Predication and Inherence in Aristotle's *Categories*," *Phronesis* 15 (1970), 179–203; J.C. Kunkei, "A New Look at Non-Essential Predication in the *Categories*," *The New Scholasticism* 45 (1971), 110–16; B. Jones, "Individuals in Aristotle's *Categories*," *Phronesis* 17 (1972), 107–23; Ch.I. Stough, "Language and Ontology in Aristotle's *Categories*," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 10 (1972), 261–72; R.E. Allen, "Substance and Predication in Aristotle's *Categories*," in *Exegesis and Argument*, ed. E.N. Lee, A.P.D. Mourelatos, and R.M. Rorty (Assen: 1973), 362–73; S.M. Cohen, "'Predicable of' in Aristotle's *Categories*," *Phronesis* 18 (1973), 60–70; B. Jones, "Introduction to the First Five Chapters of Aristotle's *Categories*," *Phronesis* 20 (1975), 146–72; M. Frede, "Categories in Aristotle," in M. Frede, *Essays in Ancient Philosophy* (Oxford: 1987), 29–48; and, for a new interpretation, according to which "is" functions as an assertoric operator rather than as a copula, L.M. de Rijk, "On Ancient and Medieval Semantics III: the Categories as Classes of Names," *Vivarium* 18 (1980), 1–62; and de Rijk, *Aristotle: Semantics and Ontology*, vol. 1 (Leiden: 2002).

The *Postpraedicamenta* (according to the terminology proper to the Latin tradition), a bundle of several loosely related topics concerning opposition, priority, and posteriority, change, and having (Chapters 10–15), to which medieval commentators usually did not ascribe much significance.

Consequently, in the first section of the chapter, Burley's two different general positions on the table of categories will be outlined. The second section will deal with Burley's ideas about substance. They were almost the same in the middle and last commentaries on the *Categories*, the only exception being the relation between secondary and primary substances and the entailed (implicit) redefinition of the nature of the essential (*in quid*) predication. The third section will expound his central theses on the nature, reality, and mutual distinctions of the three main kinds of accidents: quantity, quality, and relation. Finally, I shall draw some conclusions about the significance of Burley's last version of the theory of the categories, trying to place it against the background of his former doctrine in order to show similarities and differences.

## 1. *The Categories of Being*

As has been already said, since late antiquity many disputes took place about the general evaluation of the Aristotelian treatise on the *Categories*, whether it primarily deals with world things or their signs. According to the answer, it is customary to divide medieval philosophers into realists (things) and nominalists (signs) concerning categories. This way of classifying is questionable. On the one hand, some authors, such as Robert Kilwardby and Thomas Sutton,[6] following Boethius,[7] support a

[6] See, e.g. Robert Kilwardby, *Notulae super librum Praedicamentorum*, *prooem*., and lectio 5, MSS Madrid, Biblioteca Universitaria 73 (henceforward M), fols. 10vb–11ra, and 13va–14rb; Cambridge, Peterhouse, 206 (henceforward P), fols. 41ra, and 44vb–45ra; Thomas Sutton, *Expositio super librum Praedicamentorum*, *prooem*., and cap. *de numero praedicamentorum*, Oxford, Merton College, MS 289, fols. 3rb–va, 7ra—transcription in A.D. Conti, "Thomas Sutton's Commentary on the *Categories* according to the Ms Oxford, Merton College 289," in *The Rise of British Logic*, ed. P.O. Lewry, OP (Toronto: 1985), 173–213, at 189–91 and 196. On Kilwardby's conception of the categories see A.D. Conti, "Semantics and Ontology in Robert Kilwardby's Commentaries on the *Logica Vetus*," in *A Companion to Robert Kilwardby*, ed. P. Thom and H. Lagerlund (Leiden: 2012), 65–97; on Sutton's doctrine see A.D. Conti, "Thomas Sutton's Commentary on the *Categories*," 173–86; and Conti, "La composizione metafisica dell'ente finito corporeo nell'ontologia di Tommaso Sutton," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 2.1 (1991), 317–60.

[7] See Boethius, *In Categorias Aristotelis libri quattuor*, PL 64, 159C, and 160A. On Boethius's interpretation of Aristotle's *Categories* see J. Shiel, "Boethius' Commentaries on

nominalist solution to the problem of the *intentio* of the book (which would deal with noncompounded utterances in their capacity for being significant—*voces res significantes in eo quod significantes sunt*, according to Boethius's formula), while they offer a realist reading of all the crucial points of the treatise and judge the division into ten categories of the fourth chapter to be a division of things, and only derivatively of their (linguistic) signs. On the other hand, many realist thinkers, such as Henry of Ghent and Simon of Faversham, held a *reductionist* position about the question of the number of real categories, as the former judged only the items falling into the three absolute categories to be things in the strictest sense of the term (*res*),[8] and the latter considered quantities, qualities, and *ad aliquid* as a sort of inner properties really inhering in substances, but action (*actio*), affection (*passio*), where (*ubi*), when (*quando*), position (*positio*), and possession (*habitus*) external features of substances.[9] Very few medieval authors of the 13th century, such as Albert the Great and John Duns Scotus, developed a fully consistent realist interpretation of the *Categories* by defending the thesis of the real distinction of all the ten categories, which would be world things irreducible one to another.[10] So at the end of the 13th century two different interpretative trends can be acknowledged among the so-called "moderate realist" authors: the first somehow followed the Boethian tradition, according to which the ten cat-

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Aristotle," *Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies* 4 (1958), 217–44; S. Ebbesen, "Boethius as an Aristotelian Commentator," in *Aristoteles: Werk und Wirkung*, ed. J. Wiesner, 2 vols. (Berlin: 1987), 286–311; A.D. Conti, "Boezio commentatore e interprete delle *Categorie* di Aristotele," in *Scritti in onore di Girolamo Arnaldi offerti dalla Scuola Nazionale di Studi Medievali*, ed. A. Degrandi et al. (Rome: 2001), 77–102.

[8] See Henry of Ghent, *Summa quaestionum ordinariarum*, a. 32, q. 5, in *Opera Omnia*, vol. 27, 79–80; *Quodlibet* V, qq. 2 and 6, and VII, qq. 1–2, ed. Parisiis 1518, 2 vols., vol. 1, fols. 228v–230r, 238r–240v, and 386v–390v. On Henry's view see M.G. Henninger, *Relations. Medieval Theories 1250–1325* (Oxford: 1989), 48–52.

[9] See Simon of Faversham, *Quaestiones super librum Praedicamentorum*, q. 12, in *Opera Omnia*, vol. 1, ed. P. Mazzarella (Padua: 1957), 82–85. On Simon of Faversham's theory of categories see M. Pickavé, "Simon of Faversham on Aristotle's *Categories* and the *Scientia Praedicamentorum*," in *Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Categories*, ed. L.A. Newton (Leiden: 2008), 183–220.

[10] See Albert the Great, *Liber de praedicamentis*, tr. 1, cap. 3 and 7, in *Opera omnia*, ed. A. Borgnet, vol. 1 (Paris: 1890), 164–65; John Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones super Praedicamenta*, q. 1, in *Opera philosophica*, vol. 1, 249–56, especially 250–51. On Albert's and Duns Scotus's views see E.P. Bos and A.C. van der Helm, "The Division of Being over the Categories According to Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus," in *John Duns Scotus: Renewal of Philosophy*, ed. E.P. Bos (Amsterdam: 1998), 183–96. On Albert's doctrine see B. Tremblay, "Albertus Magnus on the Subject of Aristotle's *Categories*," in *Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Categories*, 73–97. On Duns Scotus's conception of the categories see P. King, "Scotus on Metaphysics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Duns Scotus*, ed. Thomas Williams (Cambridge: 2003), 28–38; G. Pini, "Scotus's Realist Conception of the Categories: His Legacy to Late Medieval Debates," *Vivarium* 43.1 (2005), 63–110.

egories correspond to ten distinct kinds of things, while the second was more critical of the Aristotelian text, both as to the ontological value of the table and the number of real categories. On the other hand, with the partial exception of Duns Scotus, the common belief of all moderate realist thinkers was that: (1) the table of the categories divides real entities according to their modes of being or of being predicated (*modi essendi vel praedicandi*), and (2) substance, quantity, quality, and so on are the highest genera of the categorial fields and the first principles of the items falling under them.

At the beginning of his philosophical career Burley was attracted by Henry of Ghent's theory of categories. In the chapter on the *sufficientia praedicamentorum* of his middle commentary on the *Categories* (the *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*) Burley seems to accept the idea that apart from the categories of substance, quantity, and quality the other seven do not contain things in the strictest sense of the term, but only real aspects of the former. In fact, Burley mentions three different accounts of the problem of the number and distinction of the ten categories (the problem of the *sufficientia praedicamentorum*), and, although he does not explicitly endorse any of those opinions, he is not exactly neutral on the matter, as his comments suggest that he agrees with those authors who think that, properly speaking, only the three absolute categories are fully things. Moreover, he maintains that the ten categories can be ordered in terms of their degrees of reality, as the nonabsolute categories are caused by and grounded in the three absolute ones.[11] Burley, however, does not recall the final conclusion of Henry's analysis concerning categories: that they are the supreme genera of human concepts and not of reality, as (in Henry's opinion) the distinction between a *res* and its *respectus* would depend on our mind. On the contrary, since his earlier works Burley appears firmly convinced that we can only give meaning to our thoughts and linguistic expressions by correlating them with items of the world, and so that to different terms different things, or different real aspects of a thing, must correspond in the extramental reality.[12]

The first exposition of the *sufficientia praedicamentorum* he mentions looks like a version of the method utilized by Kilwardby in the *lectio* 5 of

[11] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de sufficientia predicamentorum*, provisional edition by A.D. Conti available at http://www-static.cc.univaq.it/diri/lettere/docenti/conti/Allegati/WB_praedicamenta.pdf, see 24, 9–25, 6.

[12] On Burley's solutions of the problem of the *sufficientia predicamentorum* see M. von Perger, "Understanding the Categories by Division: Walter Burley vs. William of Ockham," in *La tradition médiévale des Catégories (XII^e–XV^e siècles)*, ed. Joël Biard and Irène Rosier-Catach (Louvain: 2004), 37–52.

his commentary on the *Categories*, where the inherence proper to the nine forms of accidents is first divided according to the "triad": matter, form, and composite, and then according to the following modes: coming from inside, coming from outside, and coming partially from inside and partially from outside. According to this first view, there are two fundamental modes of being proper to world items: being by itself, which characterizes substances, and being in something else (*alteri inheaerens*), which characterizes accidents. The latter is subdivided into three less general modes: being in something else in virtue of its matter; being in something else in virtue of its form; and being in something else in virtue of the whole composite. Something can be in something else in virtue of its matter, form, and composite according to three different ways: from inside (*ab intrinseco*), from outside (*ab extrinseco*), and partially from inside and partially from outside (*partim ab intrinseco et partim ab extrinseco*). If something is in something else in virtue of its matter and from inside, then it is a quantity; if from outside, it is a where (*ubi*); if partially from inside and partially from outside, it is an affection (*passio*). If something is in something else in virtue of its form and from inside, then it is a quality; if from outside, it is when (*quando vel quandalitas*); if partially from inside and partially from outside, it is an action (*actio*). If something is in something else in virtue of the whole composite and from inside, then it is a relation; if from outside, it is a possession (*habitus*); if partially from inside and partially from outside, it is a position (*positio*).[13]

The second example of *sufficientia praedicamentorum* is derived from Simon of Faversham's commentary on the *Categories* (q. 12). Burley claims that according to some scholars (*aliqui*) the procedure of proving that the categories are the ten listed by Aristotle is based on the modes of being proper to everything that is (*omne quod est*). Two are the most fundamental ones: being by itself, proper only to substance; and being in something else, proper to any other kind of being. The latter is subdivided into being in something else (namely a substance) in virtue of something which is part of the subject of inherence (*per aliquid intrinsecum*), and being in something else in virtue of something coming from outside (*per extrinsecum*). That something inheres in substance in virtue of something which is part of it can happen in two different ways: absolutely or in virtue of a relation to a third *res*. If something is in something else absolutely in

[13] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de sufficientia predicamentorum*, 22, 15–29.

virtue of its matter, it is a quantity; if in virtue of its form, it is a quality. If something is in something else in virtue of a relation to a third thing, it is a relation (*relatio*). In its turn, the being in something else in virtue of something coming from outside is divided into three submodes, each one divided into two other ones.[14] As is evident, according to this view, categorial items are distributed among four different level of being each feebler than the preceding one: substance, quantity, and quality, relation, and the remaining six categories. On the contrary, according to the first account, the only important difference of level in reality was that between substance and accidents.

The third opinion about the number and ontological status of categories, inspired by Henry of Ghent, holds that being-in-relation-to-something-else (*esse ad aliud*) (i.e. the mode of being of the seven nonabsolute categories), does not involve a true *res* distinct from substance, quantity, and quality, but only their *real* aspects. Unlike Henry, Burley does not maintain that the ten categories derive from the *esse participatum*, typical of creatures only, but from being in general, according to the differences in modes of being. The main kinds of them are the three following: (1) in itself (*esse in se*), proper to substance; (2) in something else (*esse in alio*), characteristic of quantity and quality; and (3) in relation to something else (*esse ad aliud*), peculiar to relation and the other six categories.[15]

In his last commentary on the *Categories*, because of Ockham's attacks on the common realist view, Burley proposed a new theory, more radical than the preceding one. The *Venerabilis Inceptor* had held that: (1) the ten Aristotelian categories sort mental, written, and spoken terms, considered according to their semantic properties, and not things outside the intellect; and (2) all the categorematic terms of our language, belonging to whatsoever category, signify only individual substances and/or qualities, which alone have an extramental kind of existence. Experience and reasoning support the view that only individual substances and qualities have an extramental form of reality, since no other kind of categorial items is necessary in order to explain the signifying function of terms and propositions, the distinction between essential and accidental predication, the validity of our knowledge, and the possibility of definitions. Ockham used many semantic devices to make his point. In general, he tried to provide

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[14] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de sufficientia predicamentorum*, 25, 26–26, 23.

[15] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de sufficientia predicamentorum*, 26, 24–27, 2, quoted above, Chapter Two, 66, note 64.

us, at the propositional level, with paraphrases of propositions that seem at first to refer to entities whose extramental reality he does not believe in.[16] In so doing, Ockham detached himself from the real intention of Aristotle, as he was to consider the Aristotelian table of the categories to concern terms alone and not things.

In his last commentary on the *Categories* Burley claims that: (1) the division into categories is first of all a division of *res* existing outside the mind, and only secondarily of the mental concepts and spoken or written terms which signify them; and (2) things in one category are really distinct from those in others.[17] What is more, (3) in discussing the problem of the *sufficientia praedicamentorum*, he recalls the first two opinions already expounded in the middle commentary (namely, those inspired by Kilwardby and Simon of Faversham),[18] but he now omits any reference to Henry of Ghent's stronger reductionist position. And finally (4), he polemicizes at length against Ockham's nominalist doctrine. Burley contends that Ockham's view on this subject is not only manifestly in contrast with the letter and the inner meaning of Aristotle's doctrine, but that it compromises the goal of any correct categorial theory, namely, the classifying and putting in hierarchical order all the world items according to their peculiar modes of being and metaphysical structure and properties. Burley's constant concern in the last part of his life (from 1324 onwards)

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[16] See Ockham, *Expositio in librum Praedicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. 7.1, in *Opera philosophica*, vol. 2, 157–61. See also *Ordinatio* I, d. 2, q. 4, in *Opera theologica*, vol. 2, 122–24; and *Summa logicae*, p. I, cap. 40, in *Opera philosophica*, vol. 1, 111–13.

[17] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de numero et sufficientia predicamentorum*, in *Expositio super Artem Veterm Porphyrii et Aristotelis* (Venice: 1497; repr. Frankfurt am Main: 1967), fol. d3ra–b: "Hic est videndum utrum illa divisio sit rerum vel vocum. Boethius dicit quod hec divisio sit vocum. . . . Videtur tamen verius dicendum quod illa sit divisio rerum significatarum per voces incomplexas. Nam illa divisio est eorum de quibus Philosophus exemplificat posterius; sed exemplificando ponit exempla de rebus et non de vocibus. . . . Dico ergo quod Aristoteles in ista divisione dividit signficata per voces incomplexas in decem res primas, scilicet in decem predicamenta. Et cum dicit Boethius quod Philosophus dividit ea que significant, dico quod verum est, sed non ex primaria intentione, sed ex secundaria intentione. Ex primaria dividit rem significatam per vocem incomplexam in decem res. . . . Ulterius est videndum an illa decem predicamenta, scilicet substantia, quantitas etc., sunt realiter distincta. Quidam moderni dicunt quod de istis decem predicamentis non sunt nisi duo realiter distincta, scilicet substantia et qualitas. Sed est contra Aristotelem et omnes alios philosophos, qui dicunt decem esse res primas omnino distinctas, scilicet substantiam, et quantitatem etc. Unde Aristoteles, I *Posteriorum*, dicit quod propositio negativa est vera in qua unum genus generalissimum unius predicamenti removetur ab alio alterius predicamenti. Ista enim est vera et immediata 'nulla substantia est ubi', et sic de aliis."

[18] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de numero et sufficientia predicamentorum*, fol. d3rb–va.

was that Ockham's approach to philosophical questions was pernicious. Many times in his later works he expressed the deepest hostility to Ockham's linguistic form of nominalism. His most important objection to Ockham's claims about categories is that, if he were right, then all the items belonging to the ten Aristotelian categories would fall into the categorial field of quality alone—a patent absurdity.[19] On the other hand, in Burley's opinion, were the division into categories exclusively a division of terms according to linguistic criteria, it would be impossible to reduce all the different kinds of simple expressions to ten alone.[20]

Such remarks are not effective since they are based on a misinterpretation of Ockham's thought. Burley assumes that Ockham holds the identification of all the accidental categories, except quality, with that of substance—a thesis which is obviously equivalent to the negation of the Aristotelian one that each category is distinct from any other. But this means to distort Ockham's statements. On the one hand, Ockham affirms that the ten *linguistic* categories (namely, the ten semantic fields into which all the signifying terms of our mental language can be divided) are really different from each other—so translating, as usual, Aristotle's principle concerning things into a rule concerning language. On the other hand, he does not assert that *in re* all the categories other than substance and quality must be identified with substance; yet, he claims that *in re* there are only two categories: substance and quality. And finally, Burley's objection that within Ockham's system it is not possible to reduce all the different kinds of simple expressions to ten alone is groundless, as Ockham elaborates a logico-linguistic method for finding the (linguistic) categories.[21] Burley could have questioned it, but, as a matter of fact, he did not, so missing his polemical mark.

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[19] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de numero et sufficientia predicamentorum*, fol. d3ra–b: "Item, illa divisio est illorum de quibus determinatur hic inferius per totum istum librum; sed huiusmodi sunt res, quia infra determinat de decem predicamentis, que non sunt voces, sed res. Quia, si essent voces, omnia predicamenta essent in predicamento qualitatis, quia omnis vox est qualitas sensibilis, et per consequens est in tertia specie qualitatis. Et sic Philosophus non determinaret nisi de qualitatibus in tertia specie qualitatis—quod manifeste falsum est."

[20] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de numero et sufficientia predicamentorum*, fol. d3rb: "Item, decem sunt membra hius divisionis que hic enumerantur; sed non tantum decem sunt voces incomplexe; ergo hec divisio non est in voces. Confirmatur sic, quia si hec divisio esset in voces, tunc sensus divisionis esset iste: singulum incomplexorum aut est hec vox 'substantia', aut est hec vox 'quantitas', et sic de residuis. Manifestum est autem quod intellectus non est ille, quia sunt multe voces incomplexe que non sunt de numero illarum."

[21] See Ockham, *Summa logicae*, p. I, cap. 40, 112; cap. 41, 116–17.

As far as the constitutive and distinctive principles of the categories are concerned, in the middle commentary Burley advances the same ideas that he was to defend in his final commentary. He thinks that what characterizes each category is its peculiar mode of being and that this is much more important than the differentiation of essences.[22] This position raises a question, however. How can the *modi essendi* be the true constitutive principles of the ten categories, if the common nature revealed by the highest genus of a certain category is what is shared by (middle commentary on the *Categories*) or present in (last one) all the items falling into it, and what distinguishes them from the other categorial items? The solution of this aporia lies in the fact that according to Burley there is an equivalence between the mode of being of a given category and the nature made known by its supreme genus. Thus the ten categories do partition what is real (*ens*), as each category is constituted by its own distinctive *modus essendi*. For instance, in the chapter on substance Burley affirms that the mode of being proper to substances consists in existing through itself and in underlying accidents.[23] Henceforth he assumes this description as the rough definition of the common nature of substance. Furthermore, in the chapter on quantity he maintains that the mode of being proper to quantity (that is, having integral parts, or parts outside of parts) is the *ratio generalis* of the category itself.[24] In this way, the real existence and distinction of the ten Aristotelian categories is backed up at

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[22] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de substantia*, 26, 19–27: "Sciendum quod ad predicamentum . . . requiruntur duo, scilicet res et modus essendi superadditus illi rei. Et ista duo requiruntur in quolibet predicamento, quoniam diversa predicamenta distinguuntur ad invicem per diversos modos essendi. Unde diversitas essentiarum solum non sufficit ad hoc quod aliqua sint in diversis predicamentis, quia in eodem predicamento sunt res diverse essentialiter differentes; sed omnes res eiusdem predicamenti habent eundem modum essendi; et si alique res habeant modos essendi primo diversos, ille res sunt in diversis predicamentis. Unde modus essendi in predicamento est formalior quam ipsa res"; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fol. d4ra: "Primo est sciendum, secundum doctrinam antiquorum sapientium, quod ad rem predicamentalm requiruntur duo, scilicet res et modus essendi superadditus illi rei. Et illa duo reperiuntur in omni predicamento. Nam predicamenta distinguuntur ab invicem per diversos modos essendi, quia sola diversitas rerum non sufficit ad hoc quod aliqua sint in diversis predicamentis. Nam in eodem predicamento sunt res essentialiter differentes; sed omnes res eiusdem predicamenti habent eundem modum generalem essendi; et si habeant modos essendi generales primo diversos, ille res sunt in diversis predicamentis. Unde modus essendi in predicamentis est formalior quam ipsa res."

[23] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de substantia*, 26, 27–31; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fol. d4ra: "Dico ergo quod aliquid reponitur in predicamento substantie per hoc quod est in natura existens cui debetur talis modus essendi, scilicet per se existere et accidentibus substare."

[24] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de quantitate*, 41, 27–31, and 43, 26–28; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de quantitate*, fol. e1rb.

a different level, inasmuch as their own modes of being are consubstantial with their own natures.

Before concluding this section, two other questions connected with the categorial table have to be considered: (1) the reckoning of the relationship of the ten categories to being (*ens*);[25] and (2) the determination of what properly falls into the categorial fields. Regarding these, Burley's position remained unchanged in his earlier and later writings.

So far as the former problem is concerned, his general position seems to be influenced by Albert the Great's. In his middle commentary on the *Categories* there is only the brief remark that being, as a transcendental, is predicated equivocally or analogically of the categories,[26] but *ens* does not feature in his discussion of the divisions of equivocation and univocity. By contrast, the first commentary on the *Physics* contains a settlement of the problem, which remained unchanged in the last one, with the only exception being a shift in terminology. According to the standard interpretation of the opening passages of the *Categories*[27] equivocal terms are correlated with more than one concept and refer to a multiplicity of things sharing different natures, whereas univocal terms are correlated with only one concept and refer to a multiplicity of things sharing one and the same nature. In the *quaestio*: "utrum ens sit equivocum ad decem predicamenta" of the first book of his *Expositio librorum Physicorum* (1316) Burley states that being (*ens*) is at the same time univocal and analogical with respect to the categories. It is univocal since the items falling into the categorial fields are called beings (*entia*) according to a single concept, and not according to many. It is analogical as being is shared by the ten categories in ten different ways: directly by substance and secondarily by accidents.[28] In his last commentary on the *Physics* (1324–34) the *Doctor planus et perspicuus* claims that *ens* is at the same time univocal and equivocal with respect to the categories. It is univocal broadly speaking (*communiter*) as a unique concept, but not a single nature corresponds to it, even though the categorial items which fall under it "share" it in different ways. It is equivocal, but not most strictly, because this unique concept is attributed to the categorial items according to a hierarchy of

[25] For a detailed treatment of this problem in Burley, viewed in its historical and doctrinal context, see above, Chapter Four, 135–165.

[26] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de equivocis*, 5, 10–11.

[27] See Aristotle, *Categories* 1, 1a1–12.

[28] See Burley, *Expositio librorum Physicorum*, lib. I, questio: "utrum ens sit equivocum ad decem predicamenta", Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 448, (172–543), 192b–193b.

value.[29] As is evident, the two *Physics* commentaries differ only in their use of the terms "analogy" (and derivatives) and "equivocation" (and derivatives). In the first commentary, Burley calls equivocal only those terms that Boethius had defined as *aequivoci a casu*, and employs the term "analogous" for those classified by Boethius as equivocal *a consilio*. On the contrary, in his last commentary, he calls *aequivoci proprie* those terms named equivocal *a consilio* by Boethius, and *aequivoci magis proprie* those that Boethius named *a casu*.[30] Within Burley's system, what seems to differentiate analogy from univocity is the way in which a certain nature or concept is shared by a set of things: analogous things share it according to different degrees (*secundum magis et minus*, or *secundum prius et posterius*), univocal things share it all in the same manner and to the same degree. So, according to Burley, being is a sort of basic stuff of the metaphysical structure of each reality, which possesses it in accordance with its own nature and peculiar mode of being.

More interesting is Burley's solution to the problem of which entities properly fall under which categories. Unlike most medieval thinkers, he was well aware of the importance of this question, which he discusses in the chapter on relation of his middle and last commentaries on the *Categories*. According to the common realist view, not only simple accidental forms (such as whiteness), but also the compound entities they cause when inhering in substances (*album*) belong to the nine categories of accident. Burley denies this, since he regards the entities resulting from the combination of substance and accidental forms as mere aggregate *per accidens*, lacking in any real unity. He claims that what is signified by abstract terms (i.e. simple forms such as whiteness and fatherhood) properly falls under the ten categories, whereas what is signified by concrete accidental terms does not. In fact, concrete accidental terms, such as "*album*" or "*pater*", do not signify simple entities, but aggregates compounded by a substance and the form connoted by the term itself. Such aggregates are lacking in numerical unity and hence do not properly fall into any of the ten categories, even though an aggregate may be said to belong *per accidens*, namely improperly and reductively, to the category to which its accidental form belongs.[31]

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[29] See Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis expositio et quaestiones* (Venice: 1501; repr. Hildesheim: 1972), lib. I, tr. 2, cap. 1, fols. 12vb–13ra.

[30] For Boethius's divisions of equivocal terms see his *In Categorias Aristotelis libri quattuor*, 166A–D.

[31] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de relatione*, 60, 24–61, 8; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de relatione*, fol. f4rb: "Circa

## 2. *Substance and Existence*

The core of Burley's theory of categories is the doctrine of substance, developed in the fifth chapter of his commentaries on the *Categories*. There are very few differences between the two commentaries, and hence they can be examined jointly. Burley's discussion can be divided into four main branches. (1) The first attempts to clarify what characterizes substance. (2) The second is concerned with the two connected problems of defining precisely (2.1) what falls by itself into this category and (2.2) the categorial status of the substantial difference. (3) The third deals with the distinction between primary and secondary substances. (4) The fourth tries to answer the question of what existential relation links the accidental forms to the primary substances.

Burley characterizes substance as something which is not in a subject, has an essence, has autonomy and independent existence, and underlies accidental forms.[32] This seems to mean that primary substances alone (that is, individual, or singular, substances) are substances properly speaking. This conclusion is confirmed by his analysis of the distinctive mark (*proprium*) of the category of substance as being capable of admitting opposites while remaining numerically one and the same, a description satisfied only by individual substances.[33] As a consequence, secondary

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istud predicamentum oportet videre que sint per se in hoc predicamento et quid est nomen generis generalissimi istius predicamenti. Pro quo est sciendum quod relationes sunt per se in hoc predicamento et non relativa. Verbi gratia, paternitas et filiatio, similitudo et dissimilitudo, equalitas et inequalitas, et huiusmodi, sunt per se in hoc predicamento tamquam species istius generis; sed pater et filius, simile et dissimile non sunt per se in hoc predicamento, sed solum per accidens, sive reductive. . . . Illud quod est aggregatum ex rebus diversorum generum non est per se in aliquo genere uno; sed illud quod significatur per terminum concretum accidentalem est aggregatum ex rebus diversorum generum; ergo non est aliquod tale in aliquo predicamento vel genere per se. Et ideo illud quod significatur per huiusmodi nomina 'pater' et 'filius' non est per se in genere."

[32] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de substantia*, 29, 15–18: "Unde dico quod aliquid reponitur in predicamento substantie per hoc quod est res aliqua et natura cui debetur talis modus essendi, qui est subsistere in se ipso et substare accidentibus. Unde modus essendi substantie constituitur ex duobus, scilicet ex hoc quod subsistit in se ipso, sic quod non dependet ab alio, et per hoc quod substat aliis, puta accidentibus"; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fol. d5ra–b: "Dico ergo quod aliquid reponitur in predicamento substantie per hoc quod est in natura existens cui debetur talis modus essendi, scilicet per se existere et accidentibus substare. . . . Substantia est ens habens quidditatem stabilem, sive substantialem, cuis esse est in subiecto non esse. Et sic est genus generalissimum."

[33] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de substantia*, 41, 20–23: "Sexta proprietas est ista: substantia manens una et eadem numero est susceptibilis contrariorum. Et hec proprietas est proprie propria prime substantie, quia convenit omni prime substantie et solum tali. Unde hec est conclusio decimatertia huius capituli: sola

substances (namely, universal substances, or substantial common natures or forms) belong to the category of substance by virtue of the individuals that instantiate them, since they do not satisfy any of the last three requirements. Secondary substances therefore are *per se* in the category of substance only insofar as they are predicated *in quid* of individual (or primary) substances.[34] In fact, unlike primary substances, secondary substances are forms, and consequently incomplete entities with an imperfect and dependent mode of existence. They require composite substances in order properly to exist. No form as such, not even the substantial ones, is formally a substance, since no form as such has the capacity of existing by itself.[35]

Individual substances, although simple objects (*incomplexa*) in Burley's classification of *res*, are nevertheless compounded by individual matter and form. So one has to ask whether or not these latter belong to the category of substance. According to Burley, the answer is negative, since they clearly do not fulfill the above conditions for being a substance.[36] But what about the *differentiae substantiales*, which play an important role within Burley's system insofar as they: (1) divide the *summum genus* into subgenera and these latter into species; (2) contribute to make up the nature of universal substances; and (3) consequently occur in their definitions?

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substantia manens una et eadem numero est susceptibilis contrariorum"; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fol. e2vb.

[34] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fol. d4ra: "Unde hec duo requirunt et sufficiunt ad hoc quod aliquid sit in predicamento substantie tamquam individuum istius predicamenti, scilicet quod per se existat et substet accidentibus illud individuum. Sed species et genera que predicantur in quid de illo individuo sunt per se in predicamento substantie, et aliter non."

[35] Angelic intelligences are per se in the category of substance, however, since they are not pure forms, but absolutely simple substances which exist by themselves and underlie accidents—see Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de substantia*, 28, 3–5, and 29, 17–19; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fol. d5ra.

[36] Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de substantia*, 29, 22–29: "Similiter materia et forma, que sunt partes substantie composite, non sunt per se in hoc predicamento, quia non subsistunt in se ipsis nec possunt habere esse separatum a composito. Sunt tamen in hoc predicamento per reductionem. Nam ex hoc quod compositum est per se in genere partes essentiales compositi pertinent ad illud genus; et sic sunt in illo genere per aliud, ut per compositum; et sic per reductionem"; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fol. d5ra: "Ex dictis patet quod materia et forma, que sunt partes substantie composite, non sunt per se in predicamento substantie, quia, quamvis substent accidentibus (verbi gratia, materia substat quantitati, forma qualitati, ut anima intellectiva substat qualitatibus ut scientie et opinioni), non tamen subs<is>tant per se. Et ideo eis non competit modus essendi per quem res ponitur in predicamento substantie; quia modus est per se existere et accidentibus substare."

Their case is much more complex, as they appear both to be qualities[37] (and in fact the terms which signify them are adjectival) and substances (because, like the secondary substance, they are said of the individual substances and are not in them as in a subject).[38] So, in late antiquity, in trying to reconcile the two possibilities, Boethius had maintained that the substantial difference was something in between substance and quality.[39] Burley follows this opinion only in part in that he amends and integrates it with the notion of *linea praedicamentalis*. He starts by noting that the substantial differences share both the natures of substance and quality, but concludes that they belong to the categorial field of substance only, as, like secondary substances, they are predicated univocally of the primary substances. However, substantial differences, unlike genera and species of individual substances, are not directly in the predicamental line of the category itself, but indirectly and "beside" it.[40] As a consequence, according to Burley, substantial differences are *quasi* secondary substances, since they do not directly name the kinds (or types) of substances that genera and species of the category set up.

Burley's discussion of the distinction between primary and secondary substances sheds new light on the semantic basis of his doctrine of universals,[41] as he identifies the secondary substance with the *quale quid* and the primary substance with the *hoc aliquid*, and consequently secondary substances (namely, the universals of the category of substance) with the *significata* of general nouns of that category (such as "man") and primary substances (namely, the individuals of the category of substance) with the *significata* of individual expressions of that category (such as "this man", which refers to a single human individual only). Furthermore, he assumed that common nouns of the category of substance, when used predicatively, specify which kind of substance a certain individual

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[37] The Stagirite himself claims that in *Metaphysics* V, 14, 1020a33–b1 and 1020b13–16.

[38] See Aristotle, *Categories* 5, 3a 33ff.

[39] Boethius, *In Categorias Aristotelis libri quattuor*, 192 B–C.

[40] Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de substantia*, 35, 1–5, and 16–23; and 35, 31–36, 8; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fol. e1va–b: "Intelligendum est hic quod differentia de genere substantie est secunda substantia, sed non est directe in linea predicamentali substantie, sed indirecte et a latere. . . . Quod autem omnes substantie secunde et differentie substantiales predicentur de primis substantiis univoce, probatur."

[41] On Burley's two different theories of universals set in their metaphysical and semantic context see above, Chapter Five, 167–189, and M. Vittorini, "Predicabili e categorie nell'ultimo commento di Walter Burley all'Isagoge di Porfirio," Ph.D. diss., University of Salerno: academic year 2004–05.

substance is.[42] As a consequence, he thought of universals and individuals as linked together by a sort of relation of instantiation. In other words, he conceived of primary substances as *the* tokens of secondary substances (and, more generally, individuals as tokens of universals), and secondary substances as *the* types of primary substances (and, in general, universals as types of individuals). In fact, according to Burley: (1) individual substances are unique physical entities, located at a particular place in space and time, and universal substances are their specific or generic forms—that is, their intelligible natures, immanent in them, having no independent existence, and apt to be common to many different individuals at the same time. (2) Any individual substance can be recognized as a member of a certain natural species by virtue of its conformity to the universal substance that it instantiates, and by virtue of its likeness to other individual substances. So, in Burley's view, a general noun supposits for and names (*appellare*) the individual substances only by way of the common nature (the universal substance) that it directly signifies and which is present in a set of individuals. For instance, the noun "man" names and can stand for each and every man only because of its primarily signifying the common form *humanitas*, which is present in each and every man and discloses their nature.[43]

In the middle commentary on the *Categories*[44] (as well as in the third question of the first book of his commentary on the *De anima*)[45] Burley

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[42] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de substantia*, 36, 9–28; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fols. e1vb–e2ra.

[43] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de substantia*, 37, 10–25; and *Expositio super Librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fol. e2ra.

[44] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de substantia*, 34, 25–35, 5: "Notandum quod hec conclusio habet veritatem ex his duobus, quia universalia non habent esse nisi in singularibus, et similiter accidentia non habent esse nisi in subiectis; si ergo destruantur prime substantie, cum secunde substantie non habent esse separatum a primis, sequitur quod secunde substantie destruuntur. Et sic, si prime substantie non sunt, nec substantie secunde sunt; et ita nullum subiectum alicuius accidentis est. Et per consequens nullum accidens est, quia accidens non est nisi in subiecto. Ergo destructis primis substantiis destruuntur omnia alia, scilicet tam secunde substantie quam accidentia. Si arguitur contra: secunde substantie sunt incorruptibiles et prime substantie corruptibiles; sed ad destructionem corruptibilis non sequitur destructio incorruptibilis; ergo etc., dicendum quod, quamvis secunde substantie sint incorruptibiles, tamen non habent incorruptibile et perpetuum esse, nisi ex hoc quod habent esse successive in primis substantiis, que sunt corruptibiles. Et ideo, si ad destructionem unius corruptibilis non sequitur destructio incorruptibilis, tamen ad destructionem omnium corruptibilium bene sequitur destructio incorruptibilium."

[45] See Burley, *Expositio libri De anima* (1316), Vatican City, Bibl. Apostol. Vat., Vat. Lat. MS 2151, fols. 9ra–11ra—see above, Chapter Five, n. 70.

claims that: (1) secondary (namely, universal) substances have no being (*esse*) outside the being of their particular instantiations, and (2) an individual substance, such as Socrates, is compounded not only by singular form and matter, but also by any substantial common nature (or substantial universal) which is predicated *in quid* of it. In contrast, in his last commentary on the *Categories*[46] (as well as in his last commentary on the *Physics* and the later *Tractatus de universalibus* and *Quaestiones octo super logicam in communi necnon super Porphyrii Isagogen*) he maintains that: (1) universals fully exist outside the mind and are *really distinct* from the individuals they are present in (and are predicated of); and (2) each species (and genus) is one and the same in species (or genus) and not in number (i.e. it has some sort of unity and identity other than numerical ones). So individual substances are not composed of anything but singular form and matter. The lowest species is not a constitutive part of the individuals it is in and is predicated of, but only a form coming together with their individual essences, and making their metaphysical structure known: it is the species (namely, the type) which individuals belong to (namely, instantiate). In this way—thinks Burley—the inconsistencies stressed by Ockham vanish, as, if universal substances are no longer constitutive parts of the individual substances, they cannot take the (opposite) properties of the latter. In fact, the *Venerabilis Inceptor* had argued that the common realist account of the relationship between universals and individuals, according to which universals share the same being as their individuals, was inconsistent with the standard definition of real identity, according to which two things *a* and *b* are identical if and only if, for all *P*, it is the case that *P* is predicated of *a* if and only if it is predicated of *b*. His most general argumentation was that, if universals are something existing *in re*, really identical with their individuals, then whatever is predicated of individuals

[46] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fols. d2vb–d3rb: "Dicendum quod sola substantia singularis non componitur ex universalibus, sed solum ex singularibus; quia Sortes non componitur nisi ex hac materia et hac forma, et non componitur ex genere et differentia que predicantur de eo in quid. … Dicendum quod non oportet quod annihilando individuum annihilaretur species hominis, quia species hominis non est pars Sortis. … Ad illud quando probatur quod species est pars individui, quia est quidditas individui, dicendum quod quidditas et forma unum sunt; et ideo, sicut forma est duplex, scilicet forma declarans quidditatem et forma perficiens materiam, sic quidditas est duplex: quia quedam est quidditas que est forma perficiens materiam et quedam <que> est forma declarans quidditatem. Quidditas que est forma perficiens materiam est pars individui cuius est quidditas; sed quidditas declarans quidditatem non est pars individui cuius est quidditas, nec est de essentia talis individui, sed est essentialiter concomitans essetiam eius."

must be predicated of their universals too, and so a unique universal entity (say, the human nature) would possess contrary attributes simultaneously via the attributes of different individuals—a conclusion that was clearly unacceptable.

A main difficulty arises from Burley's last solution of the problem of the relationship between primary and secondary substances in relation to the standard Aristotelian background commonly accepted in the 13th and 14th centuries: within his new ontology, it was difficult to distinguish suitably between essential and accidental predication, since secondary substances (namely, the universal forms of the category of substance) necessarily presupposed primary substances for their existence in the same way as accidental forms did. Thereby, their relation to primary substances appeared to be nearly the same as that peculiar to accidental forms: a sort of inherence. Indeed, when moderate realists (and Burley himself at the beginning of his academic career) interpreted the relation between universals and individuals in terms of identity in being, they were trying to save the ontological primacy of individual substances while at the same time reading in a realist way the nature and division of predication, and the twofold partition (into substantial and accidental, individual and universal items) set in the second chapter of Aristotle's *Categories*. On the one hand, they assumed that being a universal was equivalent to being-said-of-something-as-a-subject, while on the other hand they considered that relation as a real relation between two different kinds of beings. As a result, they were compelled to postulate a form of identity between universals and individuals: universals are (metaphysical) parts of their individuals; otherwise it would have been impossible to distinguish the relation of being-said-of-something-as-a-subject (or essential predication) from the relation of being-in-something-as-a-subject (or accidental predication, or inherence). Both universal substances and accidents are somehow present in individual substances and neither can exist apart from individual substances, but universals are parts of individuals and accidents are not.[47] On the other side, notwithstanding their sharing of the same being of their individuals, universals cannot be entirely identical with individuals, since there is not a complete transitivity in predication between them. So, Burley's conviction that secondary substances are forms whose being is really different from the being of the primary substances in which they are present entailed a change from an Aristotelian metaphysics to a different

[47] See Aristotle, *Categories* 2, 1a24–25.

one "dangerously" (in the opinion of many among his contemporaries) close to Plato's thesis on the ontological status of the ideas.

Yet an obvious consequence of the fact that secondary substances are forms in relation to primary substances is that primary substances are the substrate of existence of any other kind of being, as accidents are in them as in a subject and secondary substances and differences are predicated of them as a subject. Like Aristotle,[48] in both the middle and last commentaries on the *Categories*, Burley could therefore affirm, without introducing any restrictive clause, that primary substances are the necessary condition of existence for any other item of the world. In fact, nothing could exist if they stopped being.[49] This was still possible since he held that universals were forms, and therefore entities existentially incomplete and dependent which require the existence of at least one individual substance which instantiates them for being *in actu*.[50] In commenting *Categories* 5, 2a35–b6, Burley observes that this passage goes against Ockham's position on universals, since, if universal substances were concepts, the destruction of all the members of a certain species could not imply the disappearance of the corresponding universal.[51] As a consequence, the distinction between substantial and accidental forms seems to derive from their different relations to primary substances, which instantiate substantial forms (which in turn, *qua* instantiated, are secondary substances), so that such universal forms disclose the natures of particular substances. By contrast, those forms that simply affect primary substances without being actually joined to their natures are accidental forms. In Burley's words, the forms in relation to which particular substances are the *supposita* are substantial forms

[48] See Aristotle, *Categories* 5, 2b5–6.

[49] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de substantia*, 34, 18–35, 5—see above n. 44.

[50] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fol. d3va: "Hec est conclusio quinta huius libri; et est ista: destructis primis substantiis impossibile est aliquid aliorum remanere. Hec conclusio probatur sic: omnia alia a primis substantiis aut sunt in primis substantiis aut dicuntur de primis substantiis; sed destructis primis substantiis destruuntur omnia que sunt in primis substantiis; et per consequens omnia que dicuntur de primis. Et per consequens destructis primis substantiis impossibile est aliquid aliorum remanere."

[51] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fol. d6va: "Hic patet evidenter quod secunde substantie non sunt conceptus in anima, quia, si secunde substantie essent conceptus anime, tunc destructis primis substantiis possibile esset alia remanere. Nam destructis omnibus rosis adhuc potest conceptus rose remanere in anima. Et ita species potest manere destructis omnibus individuis suis—quod est contra Philosophum hic."

(or secondary substances), whereas those forms in relation to which particular substances are the *subiecta* are accidental forms.[52]

Such a dependence of secondary substances and accidental forms on primary substances does not mean, however, that it would be possible to find a primary substance: (1) that would not belong to a certain species, and (2) without any accident inhering in it. It simply means that, from the point of view of full existence, accidents and secondary substances always presuppose primary substances, but not vice versa, just as a material form presupposes matter. To be an accidental form is to be an outer property (or modification) of substance, and to be a secondary substance is to be an inner and essential determination (*quale quid*) of a primary substance, but to be a primary substance is to be an autonomous singular existing object (*hoc aliquid*), the being of which does not presuppose or depend on anything else, as it is not in a subject and it is not said of a subject.[53] This implies a distinction between being and existence, as the former is the universal condition of every kind of reality and the latter the mode of being peculiar to individual substances only, and through them and in virtue of them extended to any other categorial items. The result is that the priority in relation to the existence of primary substances over the other kinds of *entia* comes from inside the very structure of the categorial table, where primary substances are the ontological substrate of existence necessarily implied by the incomplete forms of being peculiar to both the universal substance and the items belonging to the other categories. The different natures of the latter, and the various ways by means of which they are connected with substance, will be clarified below, in the next section.

### 3. *The Main Accidental Forms: Quantity, Quality, and Relations*

As we have seen above, Burley thinks of primary substances as the ultimate substrates of existence in relation to anything else. As a consequence, for him, the only way (1) to safeguard the reality of accidents as well as their distinction from substance and from each other, (2) while at

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[52] See Burley, *Tractatus de universalibus*, ed. H.-U. Wöhler (Stuttgart: 1999), pars VI, 58–60.

[53] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de subiecto et predicato*, 17, 28–29; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de substantia*, fols. d3va, d3vb, and d4va.

the same time affirming their dependence on substance in existence, was to conceive of them as outer forms of the substance itself, and therefore as something existentially incomplete. Accordingly, he insists that quantity, quality, and relations, considered as abstract accidents, are forms inherent in primary substances, whereas, if considered from the point of view of their actual existence as concrete items, they are mere aggregates *per accidens* compounded by an individual accidental form and the underlying primary substance. So, the chief features of his treatment of accidents are: (1) his consideration of them as abstract forms, and (2) his commitment to their mind-independent reality, since, in his opinion, they are *things*, in a broad sense of the term in his middle commentary on the *Categories*, and in the strictest sense of the term in the last one. Hence the main goals of his reading of the Chapters 6–8 of Aristotle's *Categories* are: (1) showing the ordered internal structure of the chief categories of accidents, and (2) reasserting their distinction from the category of substance.

1. According to the standard realist interpretation of the Aristotelian doctrine of the categories, followed also by Burley, among the nine genera of accidents, quantity is the most important one, as it is the basis of all further accidents, since quantity orders material substances for receiving quality and the other accidental forms. Burley thinks that what individualizes quantity and differentiates it from the other categories are its mode of being and its *proprium*, features which are found in the entire category, in it only, and always.[54]

[54] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de quantitate*, 45, 4–13: "Dicendum quod quantitas est genus quia habet unum modum essendi seu unam rationem primam distinctam a quacumque ratione alterius predicamenti. Hec ratio est de se habere partes integrales. Hec enim ratio competit cuilibet quantitati et nulli alteri. Etsi enim aliud a quantitate habeat partes integrales, hoc non est de se, sed per quantitatem. Non tamen dico quod aliud a quantitate habet partes integrales per quantitatem effective, sed formaliter—non effective, cum quantitas non sit de potentiis activis, sed formalibus. Sicut enim omne album est album ab albedine formaliter, sic omne quantum est quantum a quantitate formaliter; et sicut impossibile est ponere aliquid esse album sine albedine, sic impossibile est ponere aliquid esse quantum sine quantitate. Sed idem est esse quantum proprie et habere partes integrales. Et ideo habere partes integrales primo competit quantitati." The very same passage occurs in the *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de quantitate*, fol. e5rb, along with the following addition: "Et cuilibet alteri competit habere partes integrales ratione quantitatis. Unde quantitas est forma que inest alicui quod est quoddam compositum ex materia et forma, inherens substantie sub ratione materie, sub ratione cuius substantia extenditur et habet partem extra partem. Unde substantia non habet partem integralem, nec partes integrales, nec partem extra partem nisi ratione quantitatis formaliter."

The evaluation of the nature of quantity as a form inherent in the material part of a composite substance is problematic, because, if the *summum genus* of the category is a form, the seven species Aristotle distinguishes (line, surface, solid, number, time, place, and speech) clearly are not. Burley tries to meet this difficulty by reformulating the notion of *quantum* and proposing a method for deducing the seven species of the quantity from the highest genus.

Encouraged by the Aristotelian distinction between strict and derivative quantities in the *Categories*,[55] Burley distinguishes two different modes of being quantified: by itself (*per se*) and accidentally (*per accidens*). Only the seven species of quantity would be *quanta per se*, whereas other quantified things (for example: corporeal substances) would be such because of one, or more, of them. So, according to Burley, only the seven species of quantity have integral parts properly speaking, whilst any other quantified thing has integral parts only in virtue of one, or more, of the real species of quantity.[56] This means that Burley proposes considering the seven species Aristotle lists not as quantitative forms in the strictest sense of the term, but rather as the most proper and primary owners of quantitative determinations, that is, in other words, as the *supposita* of the quantitative form that the supreme genus reveals, while the other quantified things would be simply its *subiecta*.

In Burley's middle commentary on the *Categories*, the seven species of quantity correspond to the seven possible ways of connecting one with the other of the integral parts of material substances;[57] but in the last

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[55] See Aristotle, *Categories* 6, 5a38–b10.

[56] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de quantitate*, 55, 19–28: "Decima sexta conclusio est ista, quod omnia quecumque sunt quanta alia a quantitatibus predictis sunt quanta per accidens. Ista conclusio probatur sic: illa que dicuntur quanta solum per comparationem ad quantitates predictas sunt quanta per accidens; sed omnia quanta alia a quantitatibus predictis dicuntur quanta solum per comparationem ad quantitates predictas; ergo etc. Maior patet, quia illud quod solum dicitur quantum in respectu ad aliud non est per se quantum, sed per illud aliud; et illud quod est per aliud quantum est per accidens quantum. Minor patet inductive, quoniam album non dicitur multum nisi quia superficies est multa in qua est albedo. Similiter actio non dicitur longa nisi quia tempus est longum in quo est actio. Similiter motus non dicitur longus nisi quia tempus mensurans motum est longum. Et sic de singulis quantis aliis a quantitatibus predictis"; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de quantitate*, fol. e5va: "Unde esse quantum est equivocum, quia uno modo idem est quod habens quantitatem tamquam suum accidens, alio modo idem est quod habens partes integrales. Primo modo est denominativum proprie et non predicatur de speciebus quantitatis, secundo modo est denominativum large loquendo et predicatur de speciebus quantitatis."

[57] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de quantitate*, 41, 28–42, 11.

commentary on the *Categories*, the common principle from which the seven species of quantity originate is not the property of having integral parts, but the new *proprium* of the category he now recognizes: being the measure of what is quantified.[58] In the sixth chapter of the *Categories*,[59] Aristotle had identified the distinctive mark of the category through the fact that only quantities are said to be equal or unequal. Burley does not agree with him, as he remarks that *quanta per accidens* also are said to be equal or unequal, even though in a derivative way.[60] So, for an alternative identification of the *proprium* of the category of quantity, he prefers to turn to Aristotle's *Metaphysics*,[61] where quantity is characterized as the measure of the quantified things.[62]

Burley's two attempts of deriving the seven species of quantity from a unique principle common to them are unconvincing, but extremely interesting, nonetheless, as they clearly show that he wants (1) to stress the unity of the category of quantity, which at first appears heterogeneous, and (2) to trace the problem of reality and the real distinction of quantities back to that of the nature and status of its distinctive marks. In this way, he tries to show that the category of quantity, like that of substance, has an ordered internal structure, and he reasserts the reality and real distinction of quantity against those authors, such as Peter Olivi and Ockham, who had attempted to reduce quantity to an aspect of material substance. Burley's idea seems to be that no material substance can be extended without the presence of quantitative forms in it, thus affirming their necessity. He certainly admits that the existence of quantity (which is an accident) always implies that of substance, but he also believes that the actual existence of integral parts in a substance necessarily entails the presence of one (or more) quantitative forms in it.

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[58] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de quantitate*, fol. f6ra: "Circa solutionem istorum dubiorum, primo accipienda est sufficientia ipsarum specierum quantitatis que ponuntur a Philosopho. Et potest sic accipi: de ration quantitatis est mensurare quantum, ut patet X *Metaphysice*."

[59] See Aristotle, *Categories* 6, 6a26–35.

[60] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de quantitate*, fol. g2rb. A similar remark is present also in the *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de quantitate*, 60, 6–17; but there Burley does not draw all the possible consequences from it.

[61] See Aristotle, *Metaphysics* X, 1, 1052b14–27.

[62] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de quantitate*, fol. e4rb: "Proprium est quantitati mensurare quantum; ratio enim mensure primo reperitur in quantitate discreta."

The question of the reality and real distinction of quantity in relation to substance is crucial in the *Expositio super Predicamenta Aristotelis*, where a very long passage deals with it. In his own commentary on the *Categories*, Ockham had argued that it was superfluous to posit quantitative forms really distinct from substance and quality, since quantity presupposes what it is intended to explain: the extension of material substances and their having parts outside parts. In fact, as an accident, quantity needs substance as its substrate of inherence; but material substances cannot receive the form of quantity if they were not already extended by themselves.[63] Burley admits that the existence of quantity, as it is an accidental form, always implies that of substance, but he denies that material substances can be actually extended without the active presence of the general form of quantity in them, even though he does not give us any sound reason for it. He simply restates that the actual existence of integral parts in a substance necessarily implies the presence of a quantitative form in it.[64]

2. Burley's treatment of quality is, in many ways, the least complex and problematic. Here he follows the Aristotelian doctrine quite closely and sometimes offers rather superficial analyses.

The main topics he deals with are: (1) the internal structure of the category; (2) the relationship between quality and what is qualified (*quale*); (3) the nature of the four species of quality Aristotle lists in the *Categories* (states and dispositions, natural capacities or incapacities to do or suffer something, affective qualities and affections, shapes and external forms—*habitus et dispositio, naturalis potentia vel impotentia, passio et passibilis qualitas, forma et circa aliquid constans figura*); and (4) the distinctive mark (*proprium*) of the category of quality (i.e. the fact that two or more things can be described as *similar* only because of quality and in respect of it). I shall focus on the first two only, since the questions they raise are more general.

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[63] See Ockham, *Expositio in librum Praedicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. 10.4, 205–24.

[64] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de quantitate*, fol. e6vb: "Ad rationem de corpore, cum dicitur quod substantia corporea de se est quanta absque omni quantitate sibi addita, illud est negandum. Nam substantia corporea non est de se quanta, sed per quantitatem. . . . Unde partes quantitatis presupponunt partes substantie quantum ad existere, sed substantia materialis presupponit quantitatem quantum ad habere partem extra partem et quantum ad esse quantam (quantum *ed.*)."

In the first lines of the eighth chapter of the *Categories*,[65] Aristotle observes that quality is among those things that are spoken of in a number of ways—an affirmation which seems to imply that quality is not a *summum genus*, as, according to Aristotle himself, what is spoken of in a number of ways always gathers in several different natures. Furthermore, the Stagirite speaks of four species of quality, without explaining how they are related to one another and to the highest genus of the category. No Aristotelian commentators had ever thought that quality was spoken of in many ways purely equivocally. Therefore no Aristotelian commentator had ever presumed that the term "quality" could have several different (but connected) meanings. On the contrary, they unanimously took for granted that it had a unique *ratio*, common to all the items belonging to the category. They disagreed about the status and hierarchical order of the four species mentioned by Aristotle, however. For example, Simplicius thought the highest genus of quality was not shared in the same way and at the same degree by the four species. As a consequence, it would be a sort of reference point and common origin in relation to its four main species.[66] Albert the Great held that quality at once and directly splits up into the four species, which all would be equally far from the highest genus.[67] Duns Scotus maintained that the so-called "species" of the quality were not properly species (or intermediate genera), but modes of quality, since many singular qualities would belong to the first three species at the same time, as, unlike species, modes are not constituted by opposite properties.[68]

As to this question, in both his middle and last commentaries on the *Categories*, Burley thinks that quality is not spoken of in many ways purely equivocally, nor that the term "quality" could have several different (but connected) meanings. On the contrary, he takes it for granted that it has a unique primary form, common to all the items and species belonging to the category, and therefore that quality is a unitary genus.[69] Yet in order to explain how the four kinds of qualities stem from the supreme genus of the category, in the middle commentary on the *Categories*, somehow

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[65] See Aristotle, *Categories* 8, 8a25–26.

[66] See Simplicius, *In Aristotelis Categorias Commentarius*, ed. C. Kalbfleisch, C.A.G. 8 (Berlin: 1907), 220–21.

[67] See Albert the Great, *Liber de praedicamentis*, tr. 5, cap. 2, 245–48.

[68] See Duns Scotus, *Quaestiones super Praedicamenta*, q. 36, 497–99.

[69] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de qualitate*, 75, 28–76, 2; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de qualitate*, fol. f2rb.

following Averroes[70] and Kilwardby as well,[71] he inserts some intermediates between the highest genus and some of the four species, claiming that quality is first of all divided into quality which concerns change (*qualificat substantiam in quantum substantia est mobilis*), and quality which does not concern change and affects substances without involving change (*qualificat substantiam in quantum est abstracta a motu*). Qualities which do concern change are affective qualities and affections. In turn, qualities which do not concern change are divided into qualities which qualify substances by themselves (*in se et absolute*) and qualities which qualify substances considered in relation to something else (*in comparatione ad aliud*). The former are principles (of change) deriving from the activity, both physical and, if it is the case, intellectual, of the substance in which they inhere, such as habits and dispositions. The latter are divided into qualities which are rooted in the substance itself and prepare it for accomplishing its operations, such as natural capacities and incapacities to do or suffer something; and qualities which inhere in substances because of the mutual position of their quantitative parts, such as figures and shapes.[72] In his last commentary on the *Categories*, instead, Burley maintains that the four species Aristotle lists are not properly species, but modes (*modi*) of the quality, as, unlike real species, they are not incompatible (*ex opposito distincte*), since many qualities which belong to the first species belong also to the second and the third ones.[73]

Finally, as far as the nature of *qualia* and their relation to quality are concerned, in both commentaries on the *Categories* Burley affirms that *qualia* are aggregates composed of a substance and a quality inhering in it. They do not belong to any categorial field because they lack in real unity. Nevertheless, since they are *qualia* in virtue of a qualitative form, they can be included in the category of quality indirectly (*per reductionem*).[74] *Qualia* share qualities in different ways and degrees. While no qualitative form admits a more or a less, their substrates of inherence do.[75] In this

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[70] See Averroes, *In Aristotelis Metaphysicorum libros commentarium*, Book V, ch. 14, t.c. 19, in *Aristotelis opera omnia cum Averrois Cordubensis commentariis* (Venice, apud Iuntas: 1550–53), vol. VIII, fols. 126v G–127rE.

[71] See Kilwardby, *Notulae super librum Praedicamentorum*, lectio 13, M 32rb–va; P 58va–b.

[72] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de qualitate*, 76, 15–29.

[73] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de qualitate*, fol. f2vb: "Ille que hic ponuntur species qualitatis non sunt species ex opposito distincte, quomodo distinguuntur homo et asinus, sed 'species' accipitur in proposito pro modo."

[74] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de qualitate*, 76, 3–9, and 84, 9–20; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de qualitate*, fol. g1rb.

[75] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de qualitate*, 84, 22–32; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de qualitate*, fol. g1vb.

way, Burley advances two important theses of his metaphysics as logical corollaries of his theories of universals and substances: (1) no universal form can be shared in different degrees by the individual instantiating it; (2) no individual form can be subject to change, except, of course, through generation and corruption.

3. As we have seen, Burley thinks that what falls under any categorial field are simple accidental forms; therefore, in his opinion, the items properly belonging to the *ad aliquid* category are relations (*relationes*) and not relatives (*relativa* or *ad aliquid*), which are merely aggregates formed by a substance and a relation. Accordingly, in his view, the relationship between relation and relatives is like that between quantity and what is quantified, and quality and what is qualified. The relation is the cause of the nature of the aggregate (that is, the relatives), of which it is a constituent.[76]

Unlike modern logicians, Burley denies that a relation is a two-place predicate, and views it as a sort of monadic function, arguing that relation inheres in a single substrate and makes reference to another thing without inhering in it. This thesis is based on the following principle (clearly stated in his last commentary on the *Liber sex principiorum*)[77] that there must always be equivalence and correspondence between the accidental form and its substrate of inherence, so that no accidental form can completely inhere at the same time in two or more different substrates—not even numbers, the different parts of which inhere in their own distinct substrates. Unlike other accidental forms, however, relations do not directly inhere in substances, but are present in them only by means of another accidental form that Burley calls "the foundation of the relation" (*fundamentum relationis*). Among the nine categories of accidents, only

[76] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de relatione*, 60, 7–13: "Sed primo oportet videre que sunt per se in hoc predicamento et quid sit nomen generis generalissimi. Pro quo est sciendum quod relationes sunt per se in hoc predicamento et non relativa, ut paternitas et filiatio sunt per se in hoc predicamento sicut species huius predicamenti, sed pater et filius non sunt species huius predicamenti nec sunt in hoc predicamento nisi per reductionem. Et huius ratio est quia termini concreti accidentales significant aggregatum per accidens, ut aggregatum ex subiecto et accidente, et ideo illud quod significatur per terminum concretum accidentalem non est per se in genere. Et ideo sicut album non est per se in genere qualitatis sicut species illius generis, sic nec pater est per se in genere relationis"; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de relatione*, fol. f4va.

[77] See Burley, *Expositio super librum sex principiorum* (1337), cap. *de habitu*, in *Expositio super Artem Veterm Porphyrii et Aristotelis*, fol. i3ra. "Intelligendum quod nullum accidens unum numero est simul secundum se totum in diversis subiective. Aliquod tamen accidens, ut numerus, est in diversis subiective secundum suas partes. . . . Similitudo autem est in uno similium subiective et in alio terminative."

quantity and quality (and action and affection, according to the last commentary on the *Categories*) can be the foundations of relations.[78]

Consequently, Burley claims that in the act of referring one substance to another we can distinguish five constitutive elements: (1) the relation itself (e.g. the form of paternity); (2) the substrate of the relation (i.e. the substance that denominatively receives the name of the relation—the animal which begets another similar to itself); (3) the foundation (*fundamentum*) of the relation (i.e. the entity in virtue of which the relation inheres in the substrate and makes reference to another substance—in this case, the generative power); (4) the antecedent term (*terminus a quo*) of the relation (i.e. the substrate of inherence of the relation considered as the subject of that relation—the father); and (5) the consequent term (*terminus ad quem*) of the relation, that is, the substance with which the substrate of the relation is connected, considered as the object with which the antecedent term is correlated (in our example, the son).[79] The foundation

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[78] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de relatione*, 62, 24–29: "Sciendum quod accidentia imperfecta inherent substantie mediantibus accidentibus magis perfectis. Qualitas enim inheret substantie mediante quantitate, ut albedo mediante superficie. Et quia inter omnia accidentia relatio habet esse debilissimum, ideo relatio inheret substantie mediantibus aliis accidentibus. Accidens mediante quo relatio inest substantie est fundamentum relationis. Sciendum ergo quod relatio fundatur in duobus predicamentis, scilicet in quantitate et qualitate"; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de relatione*, fol. f4va: "Sciendum quod relatio non inest substantie nisi mediante aliquo accidente perfectiori; et illud accidens mediante quo relatio inest substantie dicitur esse fundamentum relationis. . . . Ulterius restat videre in quibus predicamentis fundatur relatio: et videtur quod relatio, secundum Aristotelem, fundatur in quattuor predicamentis, scilicet in qualitate, quantitate, actione et passione."

[79] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de relatione*, 63, 22–26, and 65, 20–31: "Ideo dicendum quod relatio non est eadem res cum suo fundamento; sed relatio est quidam respectus fundatus in re absoluta, ita quod relationes non sunt nisi respectus in absolutis. Intelligendum est tamen quod relationes innotescunt nobis per sua fundamenta, quia illa que habent multum excellens esse et illa que multum deficiunt ab esse subterfugiunt cognitionem nostram. . . . Intelligendum est quod ad relationem requiruntur quinque, scilicet subiectum, fundamentum, terminus a quo, terminus ad quem et ipsa relatio. Subiectum relationis est substantia, ut posito quod Sortes sit similis Platoni, Sortes est subiectum similitudinis, fundamentum relationis est accidens mediante quo relatio inheret subiecto, et sic albedo est fundamentum similitudinis; terminus a quo est illud quod refertur et terminus ad quem est illud ad quod refertur, et habitudo inter terminum a quo et terminum ad quem est ipsa relatio. Verbi gratia, posito quod Sortes et Plato sint albi, tunc inter Sortem et Platonem est similitudo. Subiectum similitudinis que est Sortis ad Platonem est Sortes; fundamentum similitudinis est albedo; ipsa relatio est similitudo; terminus a quo est Sortes similis Platoni; et terminus ad quem est Plato similis Sorti. Unde sciendum quod terminus a quo relationis non est substantia sola, quia non est idem subiectum et terminus a quo, sed terminus a quo relationis est quoddam compositum ex subiecto et ipsa relatione. Similiter et terminus ad quem est quoddam compositum ex subiecto et relatione"; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de relatione*,

is the main component, since it joins the relation to the underlying substances, permits the relation to link the antecedent to the consequent term, and transmits some of its properties to the relation.[80] Even though the relation depends for its existence on the foundation, its being is completely distinct from it, so that when the foundation fails the relation also fails, but not vice versa.[81]

From this analysis Burley draws some rather important consequences about the nature and ontological status of relations and relatives: (1) The existence relations have is feebler than that of any other accident, as it depends upon the simultaneous existence of three different things: the substrate, the consequent term, and the foundation. (2) Relations do not add any absolute perfection to the substances in which they occur. (3) Relations can inhere in substances without any change in the latter, through a change in the consequent term of the relation (e.g. given two things, one white and the other black, if the black thing becomes white then, because of the change, a new accident, a relation of similarity, will inhere in the other without any other change in it). (4) There are two main kinds of relatives: real (*secundum esse*) and linguistic (*secundum dici*). Linguistic relatives (such as "knowledge" and "knowable") are connected only by the mutual reference of the nouns signifying them. Real relatives are linked as well by a relation that inheres in one of them and entails a real reference to the other. Linguistic relatives in reality belong to the category of quality. Real relatives are aggregates compounded by a substance and a relation, so that they fall under the category of relation only indirectly

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fol. 5ra–b: "Intelligendum quod ad hoc quod aliqua referantur ad invicem requiruntur quinque, scilicet subiectum relationis, fundamentum, et terminus a quo, et terminus ad quem, et ipsa relatio. Verbi gratia, pater et filium referuntur ad invicem: subiectum paternitatis est animal quod genuit; fundamentum paternitatis est actio seu potentia activa; terminus a quo est pater; et terminus ad quem est filius; et relatio qua pater refertur ad filium est paternitas ipsa."

[80] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de relatione*, 68, 25–69, 3; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de relatione*, fol. f5va–b.

[81] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de relatione*, 63, 16–17, and 26–29: "Fundamentum relationis manet destructa relatione, ergo relatio et suum fundamentum non sunt eadem res. . . . Ideo dicendum quod relatio non est eadem res cum suo fundamento; sed relatio est quidam respectus fundatus in re absoluta, ita quod relationes non sunt nisi respectus in absolutis. Intelligendum est tamen quod relationes innotescunt nobis per sua fundamenta, quia illa que habent multum excellens esse et illa que multum deficiunt ab esse subterfugiunt cognitionem nostram"; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de relatione*, fol. f5ra: "Impossibile est quod idem simul sit et non sit, quia hoc est oppositum primi principii; sed fundamentum relationis potest manere relatione non existente; ergo relatio et suum fundamentum non sunt idem. . . . Propter hec et alia est dicendum quod relatio est alia res a suo fundamento."

(*per reductionem*) because of their accidental form. Finally (5), all true relatives are simultaneous by nature (*simul natura*), so Aristotle was wrong in denying that some pairs of relatives are mutually simultaneous, but one prior and the other posterior. In fact, the real cause of being a relative is the relation, which at the same time inheres in one thing and entails a reference to the other, thereby making both things relatives.[82]

Burley's last theory of relations also makes clear that the very difference between the moderate (middle commentary on the *Categories*) and the radical approach (last commentary on the *Categories*) to the problem of the nature and degree of reality of the ten Aristotelian categories lies in the change of the ontological status of the non-absolute accidents, which were finally considered *res* like the absolute ones. It could not be otherwise: if universals and individuals belonging to the same category were really distinct between them, there was all the more reason why items belonging to different categories were so. But this would not have been possible if non-absolute accidents had been simply *respectus* of substances, quantities, and qualities, and therefore distinct from them only in virtue of their own mode of being, but not in virtue of their being itself.

## 4. *Concluding Remarks*

Burley's last theory of categories is an interesting example of that partial dissolution of the traditional doctrine which took place in the later Middle Ages.[83] Within Burley's metaphysical system, the ontological status of secondary (or universal) substances, and the relationships between primary and secondary substances and between substances and accidents (both abstract and concrete) are quite different from their Aristotelian originals. As a consequence, the nature and structure of the essential predication as well as the general meaning of the categorial doctrine are deeply modified. Burley seems to recognize a single ontological pattern, modeled on inherence, as the basis of every kind of predicative relation. Thus the relationships between individuals and universals (and hence the ontological status of universal substances) are changed. Burley conflates the real and

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[82] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de relatione*, 60, 21–75, 22 *passim*; and *Expositio super librum Predicamentorum Aristotelis*, cap. *de relatione*, fols. f2va–b, f4ra, and g1ra.

[83] On this subject see A.D. Conti, "Categories and Universals in the Later Middle Ages," in *Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Categories*, 369–409.

"logical" (so to say) levels into one: he considers logic as the theory of the discourse on being, turning on structural forms and relations which exist in the world and are totally independent of the mental acts by which they are grasped. It is through these structural forms and relations that the network connecting the basic items of reality (individuals and universals, substances and accidents) is clearly disclosed.[84]

According to the "later" Burley, the world does not consist of events or processes, but of macro-objects, the inner structure of which is unchangeable.[85] They are the basic components of the world. From a semantic point of view, macro-objects are what is signified by a proper name, such as "Socrates", or by an individual expression, such as "this particular horse". From the ontological point of view, they are aggregates made up of really different items: primary substances and substantial and accidental forms existing in them. Primary substances and substantial and accidental forms are like simple (or atomic) objects, each possessing a unique, well-defined nature. Although they are simple, some of these components are in a sense composite because they are reducible to something else—for example, primary substance is composed of a particular form and matter. Primary substance differs from the other components of a macro-object because of its peculiar mode of being as an autonomous and independently existing object—in contrast to the other categorial items, which necessarily presuppose it for their existence, even though not for their being something real. Primary substances are therefore substrates of existence in relation to everything else. The distinction between substantial and accidental forms derives from their different relations to primary substances: substantial, universal forms disclose the natures of primary substances; by contrast, those forms that simply affect primary substances without being actually joined to their natures are accidental forms. As a result, the macro-object is not simply a primary substance but an orderly collection of categorial items, so that primary substance, even though it is the most important element, does not contain the whole being of the macro-object.

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[84] See Burley, *Expositio super Porphyrii Isagogen* (1337), *prologus*, in *Expositio super Artem Veterm Porphyrii et Aristotelis* cit., fol. a2rb–va—provisional edition in Vittorini, "Predicabili e categorie nell'ultimo commento di Walter Burley all'Isagoge di Porfirio" (see n. 41 above), Appendix (429–95), 431, 30–432, 28.

[85] On Burley's ontology of the macro-objects see A.D. Conti, "Walter Burley," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. E.N. Zalta; available online at http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/burley/ (Spring 2011 Edition). See also above, the Introduction, and Chapter Two, 49–84; Chapter Three, 87–133; Chapter Five, 167–189; and below, Chapter Seven, 225–246.

On the contrary, Burley's earlier world (before 1324) consisted of atomic objects whose constitutive elements were abstract forms (or essences), both substantial and accidental, real *respectus*, and matter. In fact, according to him, what was signified by a proper name or by an individual expression was a primary substance. Moreover, in his former view, Socrates could not be regarded as an aggregate, since (1) the beings of the substantial universal forms predicated of him and those (2) of the concrete accidental forms inhering in him and (3) of the *respectus reales* present in him somehow coincided with the being of that primary substance Socrates himself was. Thus, if considered from the point of view of his being, Socrates was simply an atomic object, namely a primary substance, while if considered from the point of view of the essences contained in himself, he was a compound of really different forms and *respectus* which could be something only in it, as its components, and through its being. The way he chose for explaining the relation between universals and individuals as well as the relation between substance and concrete accidents shows that, in his earlier opinion, to be a primary substance was to be *the being* of whatever can be, and not simply the substrate of existence of every other thing. In fact, according to his earlier view, universal substances and accidents were not self-subsistent entities, but they could exist only in individual substances, as universals had no being outside the being of their instantiations and accidents depended on primary substances for its own being.[86] As a result, Burley thought that universals could be said to be everlasting because of the succession of their individuals, not because of a peculiar kind of being of their own.[87]

The shift from an Aristotelian to a "Platonic" world is evident. This explains why many late medieval realists (and in particular Wyclif and his followers) tried another way of replying to Ockham's charges, developing a philosophical paradigm intermediate between that of the moderate realists on the one hand, and that of Walter Burley on the other, by revising the notions of identity and distinction to make room for that distinctive relation of partial identity and difference that they claimed held between universals and individuals.[88]

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[86] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de subiecto et predicato*, 15, 15–17, 21.

[87] See Burley, *Tractatus super librum Predicamentorum*, cap. *de substantia*, 32, 33–33, 5.

[88] On this subject see below, Chapter Thirteen, 377–409; and A.D. Conti, "Realism," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, ed. R. Pasnau, vol. 2 (Cambridge: 2010), 647–60.

PART THREE

# THE NATURAL, MORAL, AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHER

CHAPTER SEVEN

# KNOWLEDGE

Alessandro D. Conti

In this chapter a systematic and comparative exposition of Burley's two different theories of knowledge will be offered.[1] As is well known, according to the standard medieval realist theories of knowledge, as exemplified by Aquinas and Giles of Rome, the primary object of the human intellect is the common nature (or essence) of material things; as a consequence, we can have direct knowledge of universal items only. Such essences become intelligible to us when our mind abstracts them from the individualizing properties connected with the matter and quantity. Yet an intellective knowledge of individuals is possible, if the intellect, after abstracting the intelligible species through which it grasps essences, turns its attention to the phantasm from which it has drawn the intelligible species itself. This action, the conversion to phantasm, produces a reflexive (that is, indirect), and incomplete knowledge of the individual thing represented by the phantasm itself. On the other hand, according to the standard medieval nominalist theories of knowledge, as exemplified by Ockham, individuals only are the object of our intellect, and the main form of human cognition is not the abstractive one, but the intuitive cognition, which properly concerns the existence and nonexistence of individual things. Thus intuitive and abstractive cognition attain the same singular objects, but in different ways, since abstractive cognition is indifferent to existence and produces a universal sign of a multiplicity of singulars.

These different epistemological explanations depend also on differences in ontology. According to medieval realists, individuals cannot be the proper (or even *a* proper) and adequate object of knowledge for *any*

[1] On Burley's theories of knowledge see M.J. Kitchel, "Walter Burley's Doctrine of the Soul: Another View," *Medieval Studies* 39 (1977), 387–401; Z. Kuksewicz, "The Problem of Walter Burley's Averroism," in *Studi sul XIV secolo in memoria di Anneliese Maier*, ed. A. Maierù and A. Paravicini Bagliani (Rome: 1981), 341–77; M.E. Reina, *Hoc hic et nunc. Buridano, Marsilio di Inghen e la conoscenza del singolare* (Florence: 2002), 55–70; A.D. Conti, "La conoscenza del singolare in Walter Burley," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 15 (2004), 517–40.

intellect, since: (1) their world includes common natures (or essences) besides individual things; (2) individuals stem from species by means of the prime matter (plus quantity); and (3) prime matter is by itself something opaque and unintelligible. Apart from the unsuitable theological consequences (how is it possible that God knows perfectly human beings, if individuals are *per se* something not completely intelligible?), the realist account entails a paradox: the phantasm already enables us to grasp the substance and the accidental properties of an individual thing far before the conversion to itself which follows the intellective cognition. In fact, the phantasm is an appropriate image (or representation) of that particular material thing perceived by the senses which gives rise to the process of knowledge. On the other hand, the *punctum dolens* of any nominalist description of the process of knowledge lies in the difficulty in explaining the nature and origin of the abstractive cognition and the relation which holds between the universal sign and the individuals which it refers to—how can they constitute a natural set? How can we know under a universal form (*universaliter*) something which is in itself absolutely singular? It was precisely in order to do away with the peculiar problems of the realist paradigm that in the first half of the 14th century Walter Burley worked out two different accounts of the standard realist theory of knowledge. Both of them were in some ways critical of the most common solutions proper to the realist intellectual environment, and put much more stress on the questions of the proper object of human knowledge and of the intellective cognition of individuals. Burley's first version is that developed in his commentary on Aristotle's *De anima* (ca. 1316); the second one is that expounded in the prologue of his last commentary on the *Physics* (ca. 1324).[2]

## 1. *The Theory of Knowledge in the Commentary on the* De anima

In the commentary on the *De anima*,[3] Burley deals with the problems of the object of knowledge and the possibility of a direct intellective

[2] As is well known, the first six books of Burley's *In Physicam Aristotelis Expositio et Quaestiones* were written in Paris between 1324 and 1327, while the last two, at the suggestion of Richard de Bury, between 1334 and 1337 in Oxford—see R. Wood, "Walter Burley's *Physics* Commentaries," *Franciscan Studies* 44 (1984), 275–327; J. Ottman and R. Wood, "Walter Burley: His Life and Works," *Vivarium* 37.1 (1999), 1–23, at 2.

[3] Walter Burley, *Expositio libri De anima*, Civitas Vaticana, Bibl. Apost. Vat., MS Vat. Lat. 2151, fols. 1ra–88rb—henceforth abbreviated into: *In De an*. On this work, its attribution,

cognition of singulars, especially in Questions 5 and 6 of the third book: "utrum intellectus intelligat singulare" and "utrum universale sit obiectum intellectus". The commentary on this book of the *De anima*, as it has been convincingly shown,[4] presents features more markedly Averroistic with respect to the first two books of this same commentary and the earlier questions-commentary on the third book of the *De anima*.[5] In any case, the general solution falls within the bounds of traditional moderate Aristotelianism. On the one hand, Burley admits the intellect to be able to grasp material singulars, but, on the other hand, as he is faithful to the principles of Aristotelian gnoseology, he denies that the singular is the proper, direct, and adequate object of human knowledge.[6] In order to solve the two questions mentioned above, like Averroes, Burley begins by distinguishing three different items and one state of the soul which can be designated by the term "intellect": the elementary thought (*virtus cogitativa*—which, however, for Burley, as for Thomas Aquinas and Giles, is a purely sense faculty);[7] the active intellect; the possible intellect (which, following Averroes's terminology, Burley calls material—*materialis*); and the intellect *in habitu* (i.e. that state of the intellect in which, thanks to the

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and date, see in particular A. Maier, "Ein unbeachteter 'Averroist' des XIV Jahrhunderts: Walter Burley," in *Ausgehendes Mittelalter* (Rome: 1964), 101–22; and Kuksewicz, "The Problem of Walter Burley's Averroism" (see n. 1, above—Kuksewicz, however, erroneously indicates the MS mentioned above as Vat. Lat. 2115 throughout the article); but also M.J. Kitchel, "The *De potentiis animae* of Walter Burley," *Medieval Studies* 33 (1971), 85–113; and H.-U. Wöhler, "Das 'realistische' Individualitätskonzept Walter Burleys im geschichtlichen Kontext," in *Individuum und Individualität im Mittelalter*, ed. J.A. Aertsen and A. Speer (Berlin: 1996), 313–26. A. Uña Juarez, *La filosofia del siglo XIV: Contexto cultural de Walter Burley* (Madrid: 1978), 73–75, followed by R. Wood, "Studies on Walter Burley 1968–1988," *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 30 (1988), 233–50, at 235 and 249, considers the commentary on lemmata and questions to the *De anima* as spurious, but without furnishing a valid argumentation in order to refute the attribution.

[4] See Kuksewicz, "The Problem of Walter Burley's Averroism," 341–42 and 352–71.

[5] See W. Burley, *Quaestiones circa tertium De anima*, in E. Synan, *Questions on the De anima by Magister Adam Burley and Dominus Walter Burley* (Leiden: 1997), 76–156.

[6] See Burley, *In De an.*, III, q. 5, fol. 69rb–vb—see the text of the question below, Appendix 1.

[7] See Burley, *In De an.*, II, q. 3: "utrum hec definitio anime, que est 'anima est actus corporis physici' etc., sit communis omni anime," fol. 23ra: "Ad argumentum, quando dicitur quod unus homo ab alio distinguitur per suum intellectum dico quod hoc est verum accipiendo intellectum pro cogitativa virtute, sed accipiendo intellectum *vere*, scilicet pro intellectu materiali vel agente, sic dico quod unus homo non distinguitur ab alio per intellectum." Burley in effect identifies the *virtus cogitativa* with the passive intellect of Averroes which would precisely be, for the Arab philosopher, the most noble part of the individual soul which is the form of the organic body—see Averroes, *Commentarium magnum in Aristotelis De anima libros*, III, t.c. 5 and t.c. 20, ed. F.S. Crawford (Cambridge, Mass.: 1953), 387 and 443.

union of the active intellect with the material intellect, an intelligible species comes into being in the material intellect, so generating an effective act of intellection).[8] Since, in Burley's view, both the active intellect and the intellect *in habitu* properly are not faculties of the soul, but the prime cause itself[9] and a state of the soul, respectively, it is necessary, for him, to produce two distinct solutions depending on whether it is the elementary thought or the material intellect which is considered. In the first case, the material singular is the direct and sufficient object of the intellect, insofar as elementary thought, not differently from common sense and imagination, is directed exclusively towards individuals, both substantial and accidental. In the second case, on the contrary, it is the universal which is the direct and appropriate object of the intellect, because the intentional representation (*species* or *intentio*) produced by the singular in the soul, does not get formed in the material intellect, nor is it taken in by it—as the only *species* present in the material intellect is the universal. Nevertheless, Burley acknowledges that the material intellect has also some form of knowledge of the singular, but in an indirect and derivative way (*indirecte et ex consequenti*). As a consequence, he does not agree with those authors who, on the basis of the Aristotelian assertion that "the senses are of the singulars, the intellect of universals", affirm that the singular cannot in any way be the object of intellective knowledge. According to Burley, what the Stagirite means is that the senses can grasp directly and appropriately only the singular, whilst the universal can be known in a direct and proper manner only by the material intellect.[10] What is

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[8] See Burley, *In De an.*, II, q. 3, fol. 23ra: "Per intellectum in habitu intelligo intellectum speculativum; per intellectum speculativum intelligo aggregatum ex intellectu materiali et specie retenta in intellectu materiali."

[9] See Burley, *In De an.*, III, t.c. 25, fol. 78ra: "Intelligendum, ut videtur, ex dictis Commentatoris, quod intellectus agens est prima causa et primus intellectus omnium, quia semper est in actu et numquam in potentia, nec aliquid extra se intelligit; sed ille intellectus qui nihil intelligit extra se est prima causa. . . . Nulla forma est liberata a potentia simpliciter nisi prima causa, que nihil intelligit extra se. Ex quo, <si> intellectus agens est liberatus (liberata *ms.*) ab omni potentia et nihil intelligit extra se, sequitur quod sit primus intellectus omnium."

[10] See also Burley, *De potentiis animae*, in Kitchel, "The *De potentiis animae* of Walter Burley" (n. 3 above), 111. Though in the passage in question Burley seems to deny that elementary thought can come to know the universal, in a different passage of the same commentary, he agrees that, as the (material) intellect knows the singular indirectly and derivatively, in the same way the elementary thought can know the universal, since the intentional representation of the singular and that of the universal are connected to each other in the same act of knowing—see *In De an.*, I, q. 5: "utrum intelligere sit propria operatio anime vel totius coniuncti", fol. 13va: "In virtute cogitativa non sunt nisi intentiones individuales; hoc tamen non obstante homo per virtutem cogitativam potest cognoscere

more, were the material intellect unable to know the singular, it would be impossible for us to distinguish that which is individual from that which is universal. As a matter of fact, even though the *species* present in the material intellect is universal, and therefore in itself unable to point to any particular individual, the material intellect can know the singular by means of the intentional representation (*phantasma*) present in the elementary thought, since the *phantasma* is nothing but the intentional representation of a single individual substance obtained through the accidental properties which it exhibits. Thanks to such a representation, in the act of knowing the (material) intellect can therefore make itself similar also to the singular thing attested by the senses.

Burley's explanation, however interesting, has a weak point, since it does not clarify how it is possible for the material intellect to know an individual existing outside of our mind by means of a singular intentional representation which is not present in it, but in the elementary thought. The solution to this problem lies in what he says in Question 5 of the first book ("utrum intelligere sit propria operatio anime vel totius coniuncti") and in Question 10 of the third book ("utrum intellectus materialis copuletur nobis solum per phantasma"), concerning the problem of the union (*copulatio*) of singular human beings with the material intellect, assumed as separate and unique for the whole human species.[11] On the one hand,

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universalia et quidditates rerum, per hoc quod intentiones imaginate existentes in virtute imaginativa coniunguntur cum intentionibus universalibus in intellectu materiali."

[11] See Burley, *In De an.*, III, q. 10: "utrum intellectus materialis copuletur nobis solum per phantasma", fol. 76va–b: "Ad questionem dicendum quod intellectus materialis <copulatur> nobis alia copulatione quam per formas in virtute imaginativa, quia per Philosophum et Commentatorem, commento 20 huius, intellectus materialis in eodem individuo est prior quam intellectus agens. Si tamen intellectus materialis solum copularetur nobis per phantasmata, non esset prior in eodem individuo quam agens, quia, sicut prius argutum <est>, ad hoc quod intellectus materialis copuletur individuo per formam in virtute imaginativa requiritur actio intellectus agentis, quia forme in virtute imaginativa non movent intellectum materialem nisi per actionem intellectus agentis, sicut patet per Commentatorem, commento 5 huius. Quia diaphanum non movetur a corpore nisi sit illuminatum. Ita intellectus materialis non recipit intellecta que sunt hic nisi secundum quod perficitur per intellectum agentem et illuminatur per ipsum. Et sicut lux facit colorem in potentia colorem in actu, ita intellectus agens facit intellecta in potentia etc. Ex quo patet quod actio intellectus agentis prior est quam actio intellectus materialis; ergo si intellectus materialis solum copulatur individuo per formas in virtute imaginativa, intellectus materialis non prius copulatur nobis quam intellectus agens. Similiter, sicut argutum est prius, in eodem instanti in quo aliquis est homo sibi copulatur intellectus materialis, et non oportet quod tunc copuletur sibi per formas in virtute imaginativa. Ergo intellectus materialis aliter copulatur nobis quam per formas in imaginativa. Ad primum argumentum conceditur quod intellectus materialis est forma separata a corpore secundum esse, sed ex hoc non sequitur quod intellectus materialis non copulatur corpori nisi per operationem suam,

Burley affirms that the active intellect enables universal items existing *extra animam* to be known in themselves, regardless of the knowledge of the singulars which instantiate them. On the other hand, in his view, the active intellect is not the unique efficient cause of the universal species which get formed in our mind, given that, for the formation of the universal species in the material intellect, also the presence of singular intentional representations (or *phantasmata*) in the elementary thought is necessary. Moreover, he insists that, in order for individual human beings to have knowledge, it is necessary that each be united with the material intellect by means of the intentional representation of a singular object. Finally, he claims that the material intellect is by nature united with human individuals from birth, as the perfection of their beings (*perfectio*). But a further kind of union (*in operando*) takes place when the material intellect performs an act of understanding, that is, when the active intellect illumines both the phantasm and the material intellect, so impressing on the latter the *species intelligibilis* abstracted from the former—*species intelligibilis* by means of which the material intellect can grasp the common nature of the singular substance which started the process of knowing. This close connection between the *phantasma* and the *species intelligibilis*, which originates from it, is the reason why: (1) the material intellect can know singulars through a representation which is not properly present in it, and conversely (2) the *virtus cogitativa* can know, indirectly and derivatively, common natures (or universals) ("homo per virtutem cogitativam potest cognoscere universalia et quidditates rerum", fol. 13va), even though its proper and adequate object is the singular.

This kind of explanation of the process of knowledge accounts for a twofold origin of human knowledge: the first empirical, from the senses, the other, transcendental, from the active intellect. On the one hand, the senses, external and internal, collect, decode, and elaborate a series of pieces of information coming from a singular material thing present to the senses. The result is the formation of the *phantasma* of that thing—a phantasm which is a sort of analytical description of the thing at issue by

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quia prius <fol. 76vb> naturaliter copulatur homini quam homo intelligat per ipsum. Ideo prius copulatur homini quam per operationem suam. Ad secundum <dicendum> quod non sequitur: intellectus materialis alia copulatione quam per phantasmata <copulatur nobis>, ergo copulatur nobis sicut forma corporis; quia intellectus materialis copulatur nobis sicut forma separata suo perfectibili. Unde concedo quod intellectus materialis est perfectio corporis, sed non est forma corporis."

means of its accidental properties.[12] On the other hand, the active intellect (namely, the first cause) impresses on the material intellect the intelligible species, when the phantasm inhering in the elementary thought is presented to the material intellect itself. The intellection seems therefore to consist in the matching—so to speak—of a *phantasma* with a *species intelligibilis*, a sort of categorization of world items, in virtue of which any given singular item is referred back to its type. This entails that for Burley the cognitive process is aimed at the second operation of the intellect, namely judgement (like "Sortes est homo"), and not simply to abstraction, since it is by means of judgement that the intellect subsumes a given token (the material *res*) under its type (the natural species). This fact explains also why the answer to the question concerning the proper object of the intellect is very articulated.[13]

As far as the problem of the primary object of our knowledge is concerned, in the commentary on the *De anima*, the *Doctor planus et perspicuus* distinguishes: (1) a triple mode according to which something can be the primary object of the intellect: by origin (*via generationis*), by intrinsic perfection (*via perfecitonis*), and by proportion (*via adequationis*); and (2) two different kinds of knowledge: analytic (*distincta*) and vague (*confusa*). From the point of view of the analytic knowledge (i.e. adequately articulated and developed), Being is the first object of the intellect by origin. From the point of view of a vague knowledge (i.e. not yet articulated and developed), the objects of the intellect by origin are the universals corresponding to those individuals which are got by our senses. The first object of the intellect by intrinsic perfection is the first cause, if we are considering absolute perfection (*simplicter*); but, if we are taking into account comparative perfection (*in comparatione*), it is the universal

[12] See Burley, *In De an.*, I, q. 4: "utrum accidentia conferant ad cognoscendum substantiam", fol. 12rb: "Propter hoc dico, sustinendo viam Commentatoris, quod intellectus materialis potest recipere intentiones formarum universalium, quia non est virtus in corpore, sed una (potentia *add. interl.*, *alia manu*) substantia separata. Ille intellectus numquam errat circa substantiam, quia habet perfecte speciem substantie. Nos tamen erramus circa cognitionem substantiarum, quia non coniungimur intellectui materiali nisi per phantasmata, et accidentia fortius immutant phantasiam. Et propter hoc nos non percipimus diversitatem (substantie *scr. et del.*) substantiarum omnibus accidentibus existentibus similibus. Nec ex hoc sequitur quod species substantie non sit in intellectu materiali, sed solum sequitur quod species substantie existens in intellectu materiali non sit perfecte coniuncta cum phantasmate nostro. Unde breviter, ista consequentia non valet: species substantie est in intellectu materiali, ergo nos possumus perfecte cognoscere identitatem et diversitatem substantiarum; sed oportet plus addere, scilicet quod ista species existens in intellectu materiali esset perfecte coniuncta cum phantasmate nostro."

[13] See Burley, *In De an.*, III, q. 6, fols. 69vb–70ra—see the text below, Appendix 2.

which corresponds to the individual present to our senses. Finally, the object by proportion of a given faculty (*potentia*) is that item under which all things known by that faculty fall. In the case of the intellect, Being in its widest generality is such—as only that which in some way is can be known.

Moreover, Burley distinguishes also between the object which gives rise to the process of knowledge (*obiectum motivum*) and the object which encloses in itself all the known things (*obiectum contentivum*). The first is always a singular item, whereas the second is always a universal item. In other terms: what we come to know is a common nature, but this is possible just because there are singular *res* which strike our senses.[14] Though Burley seems to accept the existence of a separate material intellect, unique for the whole human species, he is however very attentive in underlining the fact that without the contribution of the *virtus cogitativa*, which provides us with the *phantasma*, the material intellect cannot be united to the active intellect in the act of knowing. It is true that individual men could not reach an intellective knowledge of anything without the material intellect, yet it is also true that the material intellect on its own, or with the mere contribution of the active intellect, would not be capable of elaborating any form of knowledge.

This particular reconstruction of the process of knowledge is justified at the ontological level too. Burley's earlier view about the metaphysical composition of corporeal beings accounts for his choice in the questions concerning knowledge. Burley claims that corporeal beings are constituted by an individual substance and a host of accidental forms inhering in it. In its turn, individual substance is the result of the union of particular matter and form.[15] Particular form is itself constituted by a specific form (that is, the essence of the singular thing at issue) and by all of its metaphysical constituents. As we have already seen,[16] it is precisely in the commentary on the *De anima* (lib. I, q. 3) that the *Doctor planus et perspicuus* affirms that the universals of the category of substance are constitutive parts of the essence of their individuals, and have being in their individuals. For example, the body and soul of Socrates (*hec materia et hec forma*) are not the sole metaphysical constituents of that reality which Socrates is himself: Socrates's reality is also made of all the universal substantial

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[14] See ibid., fol. 70ra.

[15] See Burley, *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias* (A.D. 1301), q. 4, in S.F. Brown, "Walter Burley's *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*," *Franciscan Studies* 34 (1974), 200–95, 272.

[16] See above, Chapter Five, on universals and individuals, 167–189.

forms truly predicated of his singular substance. Thus secondary substances, namely the universals of the category of substance, are identical with the primary substances, or singulars, in the sense that they are the same singular substances considered from the point of view of the type exemplified. Therefore, according to Burley, universals simply are the type of being individual substantial forms exhibit when they inform a certain "piece" of matter. All this enables us to understand better why in the commentary to the *De anima*, Burley acknowledges some type of intelligibility of the singulars as such, though indirectly and derivatively, and also why he describes elementary knowledge in terms of a sort of categorization of the world items according to which a given singular object is referred back to its ideal type.

## 2. *The Problem of Knowledge in the Last Commentary on the Physics*

Nonetheless, about ten years later, in the prologue to his last commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*,[17] Burley was to reverse his position concerning knowledge completely. In partial agreement with Thomas Wylton,[18] who had been his *socius* in Paris, he maintained that our intellect is capable of knowing singulars *qua* singulars (*sub propria ratione singularis*) directly (*primo et directe*) and not simply as items belonging to a certain species, or type. On the contrary, now, according to him, that which is more universal can be grasped by the intellect indirectly and by refection (*indirecte et quasi per modum linee reflexe—In Phys*., I, fol. 10va). An openly anti-Averroistic statement which would steer him closer to Ockhamist nominalism, were it not for his denial of any form of intuitionism.[19]

In his discussion of the question "utrum magis universalia sint nobis prius nota quam minus universalia vel quam singularia",[20] Burley deals

[17] Corresponding to the whole of the first treatise of the first books—see Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis Expositio et Quaestiones* (Venice: 1501; repr. Hildesheim: 1972—hereafter *In Phys*.), I, fol. 5ra: "Unde dico quod liber primus continet quattuor tractatus, quia in primo Philosophus premittit intentionem suam et ordinem procedendi; et tractatus iste continetur in toto proemio."

[18] But in a different way from Burley, who, as we shall see below, speaks of a *confused* knowledge of the singular by the intellect. Wylton rather spoke of a *distinct* knowledge. On Wylton's view about the problem of the knowledge of singulars, see Reina, *Hoc hic et nunc* (see n. 1 above), 47–54.

[19] Not considering, obviously, the denial of Ockhamist ontology and the elaboration, in an extreme form, almost Platonizing, of ontological realism.

[20] See Burley, *In Phys*., I, fol. 9va–b.

once again with the problems of the intelligibility of the singular and the object of our knowledge. The question whether what is more universal is more easily known by us than what is less universal arises from the passage in the *Physics* where Aristotle affirms that our knowledge must proceed from what is universal to what is particular (or singular).[21] Burley starts establishing, against Ockham and all nominalists, that there are universals which exist *extra animam* (that is, those whose own individuals have also an extramental existence), and that all universals are *really* distinct from their singulars.[22] Then he answers the question. According to him, it is false that what is more universal (*magis universalia*) is known by us before (*prius nota*) what is less, as Thomas Aquinas had taught.[23] Whoever holds this—he argues—implicitly assumes that the passage from ignorance to exhaustive cognition (*notitia perfecta*) is mediated by the knowledge of all the substantial forms of the *res* at issue, going from the more general to the more particular. But this presupposes that in order to know something it is necessary to know all that can be predicated of it. This seems false to Burley, since it is openly contradicted by experience: for instance, one can know that the animal which stands in front of him is a horse, and what a horse is, without knowing all the other universal forms which are predicated of it.[24] A cognition of this kind is almost impossible, for it would necessarily require a systematic knowledge of all animal species and of any possible group they can form—something that no human being can achieve.[25] Neither does he find convincing the interpretation Ockham

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[21] See Aristotle, *Physics*, I, 1, 184a 23–24.

[22] See Burley, *In Phys.*, I, fols. 8rb–9vb.

[23] See Thomas Aquinas, *In octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis expositio*, lib. I, lectio 1, ed. P.M. Maggiolo (Rome: 1954), n. 7.

[24] See Burley, *In Phys.*, I, fol. 9vb.

[25] See ibid., fols. 9vb–10ra: "Cognoscens equum sub ratione equi non oportet quod cognoscat omnia universalia que predicantur de equo, quia aliquod est genus proximum equo ignotum cognoscenti equum sub ratione equi, quoniam equus est in aliquo gnere in quo est serpens, et equus et asinus sunt in aliquo genere subalterno in quo non est bos. Unde possum cognoscere equum in speciali quamvis non cognoscam genus equi subalternum proximum. Et si dicatur quod ad hoc quod cognoscatur equus in speciali oportet cognoscere omnia genera subalterna, contra: cognoscens aliqua finita potest cognoscere numerum illorum; ergo, si cognoscentem equum in speciali oportet cognoscere omnia genera predicabilia in quid de equo, sequitur quod ipse posset cognoscere quot sunt genera subalterna ad equum. Sed hoc est falsum, quia *non credo quod sit homo qui sciret me certificare quot sunt genera subalterna ad equum vel ad quamcumque aliam speciem*, quia equus est in aliquo genere cum una specie in quo non est cum alia specie, et cum illa alia specie est in aliquo genere in quo <fol. 10ra> non est cum alia specie data. Unde ad cognoscendum omnia genera subalterna oportet cognoscere omnes vel fere omnes species animalis, et non solum animalis, sed etiam substantie" [italics are mine].

gives of the Aristotelian passage in his own commentary on the *Physics*, according to which the Aristotelian principle applies only to complex knowledge and to humanity as a whole, although for each one of us taken singularly the contrary is true, as the object of our simple and exhaustive knowledge (*notita incomplexa perfecta*) is the singular.[26] Burley finds Ockham's claim ridiculous. He affirms that what is true for single human beings must be true also for humanity as a whole, and therefore that, at the level of human species too, the knowledge of that which is less universal comes before the knowledge of that which is more such. According to him, there is not a knowledge proper to humanity as a whole distinct from actual knowledge acquired by single human individuals.[27]

The *Doctor planus et perspicuus* concludes this first part, devoted to the analysis and refutation of the opinions of Aquinas and Ockham, with a remark concerning the way in which the general concepts are structured and related one to another, where he presents a sort of atomization of knowledge and reappraises to some extent the role of definition. Burley affirms that the more universal concepts are not closely connected with the less universal concepts; they do not form a logically ordered (*essentialiter ordinata*) series.[28] In a previous passage, he had already explained that definition provides us with a better knowledge of a thing than the knowledge we gain from the mere apprehension of its name; nevertheless, the simple cognition which derives from the confused and indistinct knowledge of the nominal notion (of a given *res*) is sufficient for all practical purposes, and prior by origin to the knowledge which results from its definition, as that which is more simple is prior to what is less simple.[29] For Burley, therefore, we first grasp the meaning of simple terms and afterwards that of composite expressions, like definitions. However,

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[26] See Ockham, *Expositio in libros Physicorum Aristotelis*, lib. I, c. 1, § 2, ed. W. Richter and G. Leibold, in *Opera Philosophica*, vol. 4, 24–25.

[27] See Burley, *In Phys.*, I, fol. 10rb: "Ridiculum est dicere aliquid esse magis et prius notum toti communitati, et tamen nulli persone communitatis, cum communitas nullam habeat notitiam nisi notitiam personarum de communitate."

[28] See ibid.: "Transiens de extremo in extremum debet transire per omnia media, vel saltem per aliqua media essentialiter ordinata. Et dico quod notitia magis universalis non est medium essentialiter ordinatum ad notitiam minus universalis."

[29] See ibid., fol. 7vb: "Intelligendum hic quod illud quod significat nomen definiti, ut per nomen definiti significatur, est prius nobis notum quam illud quod definitio significat, ut per definitionem significatur—et hoc via generationis et in cognitione imperfecta. . . . Sed tamen in cognitione perfecta illud quod significatur per definitionem est prius notum via perfectionis quam illud quod significatur nomine definiti, ut significatur nomine definiti."

from the point of view of the quantity of information (or exhaustiveness), the *perfectissima* definition—which includes the enumeration of all four causes of a given item and not only its proximate genus (material cause) and its specific difference (formal cause)—is superior to any other form of knowledge.[30]

In his discussion of the nature of human knowledge, the *Doctor planus et perspicuus* had distinguished between complex cognition (*notitia complexa*) and simple cognition (*notitia incomplexa*); and between two different types of exhaustive complex cognition (*notitia perfecta complexa*): (i) absolute (*simpliciter*) and (ii) relative to the general type of the thing at issue (*in genere*).[31] Now he differentiates also between appropriate (*distincta*) (and perfectly appropriate—*distinctissima*) cognition and discriminative cognition (*distinctive seu discretiva*).[32] A complex cognition of a thing is that cognition which is contained in and manifested by one or more statements, both affirmative and negative, concerning the given thing.[33] Simple cognition, on the other hand, is that contained in and manifested by simple concepts and expressions, namely terms.[34] Complex exhaustive cognition *simpliciter* is that which enables us to know all the intrinsic constitutive principles (*rationes considerandi per se*) of a *res* along with all the essential predicates and characteristic features (*propria*) associated with these principles themselves.[35] Relative exhaustive complex cognition is that which makes it possible for us to know all the essential predicates and all the *propria* associated with them in relation only to the natural species (or type) of the thing.[36] We have an appropriate

[30] See ibid., fol. 6rb: "Definitio perfectissima comprehendit omnes causas. Unde definitio perfectissima hominis non est 'animal rationale', sed eius definitio perfectissima est 'animal rationale, productum in esse ab homine et sole, propter Deum."

[31] See ibid., fols. 5vb–6ra.

[32] See ibid., fols. 10vb–11ra.

[33] See ibid., fol. 5vb: "Notitiam complexam voco illam notitiam que est de aliquo complexo, ut videlicet de propositione affirmativa vel negativa."

[34] See ibid.: "Notitiam vero incomplexam voco illam notitiam que est de incomplexo, videlicet que est de re aliqua quantum ad intrinseca sibi. Et hanc notitiam vocat Philosophus, III *De anima*, simplicium intelligentiam."

[35] See ibid., fol. 6ra: "Scientia simpliciter perfecta de aliqua re est illa qua cognoscitur illa res secundum omnem rationem considerandi per se secundum quam potest considerari, et quantum ad omnia predicata per se de illa re—ut si consideretur animal secundum omnem rationem considerandi ipsum per se, et quantum ad omnia que predicantur de ipso per se, scilicet in quantum est animal et corpus animatum, et in quantum substantia, et quoad omnes per se passiones sibi convenientes secundum omnes istas rationes."

[36] See ibid.: "Sed scientia perfecta in genere est illa qua res cognoscitur secundum aliquam rationem determinatam et quantum ad predicata que conveniunt ei per se in

cognition of a thing when we are able to list most of its constitutive elements, and a perfectly appropriate knowledge when we can specify *all* its constitutive elements.[37] Finally, we have discriminative knowledge of a *res* when we are able to distinguish the thing at issue from other similar *res* in virtue of one or more peculiar aspects or characteristics which make it different from all the others of the same kind.[38]

Keeping these distinctions in mind, we can now move on to examine how Burley articulates his solution to the problem of the object of human knowledge. According to him, to determine whether what is more universal is known by us before what is less is equivalent to establishing what is the primary and direct object by origin (*primo cognitum via generationis*) of confused and appropriate cognitions. He thinks that from the point of view of the origin of our confused knowledge, the intellect grasps first what is singular (*dico quod prius cognitum ab intellectu nostro cognitione confusa via generationis est singulare*—fol. 11rb). The argumentation he develops to support this claim is articulated in two stages: (1) He demonstrates that our intellect is able to know that which is singular, since it can easily distinguish universal items from singular ones. If the intellect were unable to know singular items, it would be impossible for it to distinguish that which is universal from that which is singular. This was the most important proof that he had utilized in the commentary on the *De anima* for demonstrating that the material intellect had some form of knowledge of the singular, however indirect and derivative.[39] (2) Then he proves that the primary object *via generationis* of the confused knowledge

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quantum tale ens solum—ut si cognoscatur animal solum ut animal et quoad per se accidentia ipsius animalis."

[37] See ibid., fol. 10vb: "Unde hic intelligo per cognitionem distinctam cognitionem per quam res distinguitur et resolvitur per virtutem cognoscentem in omnibus in que ipsa est resolubilis, vel saltem plurima. Ad distinctissimam vero cognitionem rei requiritur cognitio omnium in que est resolubilis vel distinguibilis. Et quia inferius est distinguibile et resolubile in omnia superiora essentialiter inclusa in eo, ideo ad distinctam cognitionem inferiorum requiritur et presupponitur cognitio omnium superiorum essentialiter inclusorum—et hoc si sit cognitio distinctissima."

[38] See ibid., fol. 11ra: "Cognitio distinctiva sive discretiva acquiritur per hoc quod aliquid percipitur in uno quod non apprehenditur in alio, vel aliquid apprehenditur in uno cuius contrarium apprehenditur in alio."

[39] See ibid., fol. 11rb: "Intellectus noster intelligit singulare. Quod patet, quia intellectus noster cognoscit differentiam inter universale et singulare sub propria ratione singularis, et per consequens cognoscit utrumque extremorum sub ratione qua extremum. Item, si intellectus noster non intelligeret singulare, non posset facere hanc propositionem, scilicet 'Sortes est homo'—quod est falsum. Item, operationes artis et prudentie sunt circa singularia sub propriis rationibus; sed operationes artis et prudentie, cum sint habitus intellectuales, solum sunt circa illa que intelliguntur ab intellectu nostro; ergo etc."

is the singular, as it would be otherwise impossible to explain how our intellect can obtain some form of knowledge of the singular on the basis of the previous knowledge of the universal. If we knew what is universal before what is singular, we could never reach knowledge of any singular, given that the universal *species* in itself cannot direct our intellect towards any particular individual, since it is tied to each individual by the same relation of similarity.[40]

In the commentary on the *De anima*, this remark had not prevented him from professing the exact contrary of what he intends to prove here. He had held that the (material) intellect does not know the singular through the universal species but thanks to the intentional representation of a given singular present in the elementary thought, and accessible to the intellect only at the moment of the union *in operando* of the soul of a single individual man with the material and active intellects. This means that all of the complex explanation on the process and nature of human knowledge developed in the commentary on the *De anima* is rejected in full here, and replaced by a new theory modeled, rather than on Averroes's commentary, on more strictly personal motivations of a semantic and ontological nature. As a result, the *Doctor planus et perspicuus* changes his terminology, as in the prologue of his last commentary on the *Physics* he no longer uses the orthodox Averroistic expression "*intellectus materialis*", and prefers to utilize the standard (Aristotelian) expression "*intellectus possibilis*". What is more, now in Burley's opinion, the (human) intellect does know the universal only by abstraction from singulars; but abstraction always proceeds from that which is already known to that which is not yet known; therefore, singulars are known by us before the universal.[41] Thus it is not surprising that Burley concludes this first part of his answer, devoted to confused knowledge, supporting a thesis symmetrically opposed to that proposed in the commentary on the *De anima*, namely that universals are known by our intellect indirectly and deriva-

[40] See ibid.: "Probo quod intellectus via generationis primo intelligit singulare, quia si ad hoc quod intellectus intelligat singulare oportet quod primo intelligat universale, sequitur quod intellectus numquam posset intelligere singulare. Consequens est falsum; ergo et antecedens. Probo consequentiam, quia universale est equaliter indifferens ad omnia sua singularia; ergo non magis ducit in cognitionem unius singularis quam alterius; aut igitur duceret in cognitionem omnium simul—quod est impossibile—aut in cognitionem nullius. Igitur non intelligit primo universale sic quod a cognitione universalis procedat ad cognitionem singularis."

[41] See ibid., fol. 11va: "Item, intellectus noster non intelligit universale nisi abstrahendo a singularibus; sed intellectus non abstrahit nisi a noto (toto *ed.*); ergo singulare a quo abstrahitur est prius notum intellectui quam universale quod abstrahitur."

tively, and somehow through reflection (*intellectus intelligit universale indirecte et quasi per lineam reflexam*). According to Burley, our intellect grasps what is universal only after having known at least one of the corresponding singulars, even though it knows the lowest species of each singular almost immediately, from the singular itself. Quite the reverse, all the other universals contained in the lowest species (from the proximate genus up to the highest genus of the category to which the singular thing belongs) are known only through reflection over the lowest species itself.[42]

The most immediate consequences of the adoption of this view are: (1) a new theory concerning the object of intellective knowledge, different from that presented in the third book of the commentary on the *De anima*; and (2) a new definition of the function of the active intellect in the process of knowledge.

Burley now distinguishes a fourfold way in which something can be considered the first object of the intellect:[43] by origin (*primitate generationis*), by proportion (*primitate adequationis*), by intrinsic perfection (*primitate perfectionis*), and by exclusion (*primitate exclusionis*)—the latter being the way a determinate object can be known by a certain faculty and by that faculty alone, precisely excluding all the others. The singular, and not the universal, is now considered the first object of the intellect by origin—which was obvious from what had been stated in the previous passages. Being, taken in its broadest generality, is the first object of the intellect by proportion—but now Burley explains that Being understood

[42] See ibid.: "Quando <subintellige: intellectus> intelligit primam formam, id est: proximam formam universalem existentem in individuo, in comprehendendo illam habet dispositionem similem recte linee; sed cum postea querit quidditatem illius forme et quidditatem illius quidditatis quousque deveniat ad formam simplcem non habentem quidditatem, in comprehendendo illas quidditates habet dispositionem similem linee reflexe."

[43] See ibid., fol. 11vb: "Dico quod aliquid esse primum obiectum intellectus potest quadrupliciter intelligi, scilicet vel quod sit primum obiectum primitate generationis, et sic singulare est primum obiectum intellectus, accipiendo ly 'primum' negative, ita quod dicatur primum quia nullum est prius eo, non quia ipsum sit prius quocumque alio. Unde quodlibet singulare immutans primo fortiter sensum est primum obiectum primitate generationis. Secundo dicitur primum primitate adequationis, et sic ens est primum obiectum intellectus, accipiendo ens in sua maxima communitate et ut habet hanc passionem, scilicet intelligibile, cum ipso convertibilem. Et sic dicitur ens de omni intelligibili, sicut et ille terminus, videlicet 'intelligibile'. Tertio modo aliquid dicitur esse primum obiectum intellectus primitate perfectionis, eti sic Deus est primum obiectum intellectus. Quarto vero modo illud dicitur primum obiectum primitate exclusionis, scilicet quo obiecto cognoscendo excludit alias potentias; et isto modo universale dicitur primum obiectum intellectus, quia nulla alia potentia cognoscit universale."

in this way is equivalent to intelligible being. The first object of the intellect by intrinsic perfection is God. In this case as well, there is a rather marked difference with respect to the commentary on the *De anima*, because the *Doctor planus et perspicuus* abandons the distinction between absolute and relative perfection (which had enabled him, once more, to introduce the universal as primary object of the intellect), and replaces the more impersonal and abstract Aristotelian first cause, with God (presumably the Christian God). Finally, the universal is the object of the intellect by exclusion, insofar as the intellect is the only faculty capable of knowing it.

Furthermore, as far as the role of the active intellect is concerned, the asserted intelligibility, by principle, of the singular, requires that the task of the active intellect should no longer be that traditionally attributed to it of removing the individuating conditions from the *phantasma* but rather that of acting on the potential intellect (*intellectus possibilis*). The active intellect makes the potential intellect switch from a state of purely potential intellection to a state of actual intellection (given by the presence in it of the intelligible species)—a state which the phantasm would not, on its own, be able to bring the potential intellect to.[44]

The analysis of the question of the primary and direct object by origin of appropriate cognition is far shorter and less problematic. Appropriate cognition is the knowledge which we obtain once we are capable of listing in an orderly way all the elementary metaphysical components of a thing. Consequently, the starting points of this kind of knowledge cannot be but the most general universals, as their notions constitute the basis from which the notions of less general universals and of the singulars themselves will have to be "built" and understood. The reason is that what is subordinated to something else (*inferius*) cannot be known in an appropriate manner if those things which are above it in the categorial line and constitute its essence are not yet known.[45]

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[44] See ibid.: "Necessitas ponendi intellectum agentem est non ad removendum condiciones individuales vel materiales, ut communiter ponitur, sed tota necessitas ponendi intellectum agentem est quia intentiones existentes in potentia [*alias*: virtute] imaginativa sole non sufficiunt ad movendum intellectum possibilem et ad causandum intentiones intellectas in actu in intellectum possibilem. Et ideo simul cum intentionibus imaginatis requiritur intellectus agens, non ad aliquid removendum, sed ad causandum intentiones intellectas in actu in intellectum possibilem cum intentionibus imaginatis."

[45] See ibid.: "Tunc est ulterius videndum quid est primo cognitum via generationis in cognitione distincta et perfecta. Unde breviter dico quod quanto aliquid est communius tanto est prius cognitum via generationis in cognitione distincta—cuius raio est quia

In this way, Burley points towards a double movement in the process of knowing: a first movement, connected with the activity of abstraction (or generalization) of the intellect (namely, the kind of knowledge he calls "confused"), which goes from the bottom to the top of a categorial line, namely from what is singular to the highest genus (for instance, from Socrates to substance). A second movement, tied to the definitional activity of the intellect (namely the knowledge that he calls "appropriate"), which goes from top to bottom of the categorial lines, proceeding from what is more universal, and therefore intensionally more simple and primitive, to that which is less so, to finally reach the singular items, intensionally richer and ontologically more complex than any universal.

## 3. *Conclusion*

As we have just seen, within Burley's new theory of understanding, the singular can be placed either at the beginning of the chain of knowledge, as its origin, or at its end, as its result. In both cases, what remains unchanged is that now the intellective knowledge is at stake, and not simply the sense knowledge. This means that now for Burley the singular is one of the primary objects of the cognitive activity of the human intellect. This result, highly significative from the philosophical point of view, aligns the theory of knowledge of the later Burley with the other great gnoseological doctrines of the 14th century, almost all of which were aimed at "reevaluating" the singular as possible object of knowledge. It was prepared and logically required by that turn in ontology which precisely in the last commentary on the *Physics* was taking place: the passage from an ontology developed according to the canons of moderate realism to the radically realist ontology of the macro-objects, centered over the real distinction between universals and singulars and among the ten Aristotelian categories. As we saw above,[46] the macro-objects are complex entities, designated by proper names, such as "*Sortes*", and by atomic expressions which belong to the (linguistic) category of substance, such as "*aliquis homo*" or "*ille equus*", constituted by a singular substance (= particular form + particular matter), the very core of the macro-object, and by an ordered collection

inferius non cognoscitur distincte nisi cognoscantur omnia superiora essentialiter inclusa in eo."

[46] See above, the Introduction, 1–14, and Chapter Six on the categorial doctrine, 191–222. See also Chapter Five on universals and individuals, 167–189.

of substantial general forms (= secondary substances or substantial universals) and accidental forms (both singular and general), really distinct from the singular substance and from one another. Such a conception derives from the assumption of a hermeneutical principle which is clearly formulated by Burley for the first time just in this last commentary on the *Physics*. Here, the *Doctor planus et perspicuus* observes that the causes of a particular effect must be particular as well, and those of a universal effect, must be universal. Hence he denies that a universal cause can have a particular effect and vice versa, and thus that a singular item can be directly constituted of those universal forms which are placed above it in the line of categorial predication.[47] At the cognitive level, this negation of the real identity between universals and singulars (which, on the contrary, had been assumed to be true in the commentary on the *De anima*) involved a unification of the levels of knowledge (sense cognition and abstractive cognition), in the sense of a sort of intellectualization of the knowledge of singulars, and a doubling of the object of knowledge (the singular and the universal) as well. This was necessary in order to avoid that the real distinction between universal an individual, at the ontological level, made the explanation impossible of how sense knowledge (fully centered on singulars) and intellective knowledge (centered on universals) could *meet* in the judgements concerning the individual, like "Socrates is a man." In the commentary on the *De anima*, this was rendered possible precisely because of the real identity in the extramental world of universals and individuals, but, once this identity failed, the risk would have been that of transforming the passage from intentional representation of the singular to the intelligible species of the common nature (or universal) into a sort of arbitrary distortion of the data coming from reality. The relation, now more slippery and fragile, between (substantial) universal and singular, required that singulars were removed from imperfect and lacunose sense

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[47] See Burley, *In Phys*., I, fol. 9rb–va: "Dico quod quamvis universale sit res extra animam, tamen non est pars individui, quia effectus particularis sunt cause particulares. Et sic dico quod quamvis genus sit pars speciei, tamen species non est pars individui, quia individuum sufficienter constituitur ex causis particularibus. Dico tamen quod universale est de quidditate individui, vel quod est totum respctu individui, accipiendo 'quidditatem' pro eo quod significatur per definitionem, sive pro eo quod datur in responsione ad questionem querentem quid est ipsum individuum, ut 'quid est Sortes?' et sic de aliis. Et ita patet quod Deus potest annihilare Sortem quamvis non destruat totum genus substantie, quia ad hoc quod Sortes annihiletur sufficit annihilare principia intrinseca Sortis, scilicet ex quibus constituitur Sortes, ut hanc materiam et hanc formam." On this question, see Conti, "Ontology in Walter Burley's Last Commentary on the *Ars vetus*," *Franciscan Studies* 50 (1990), 136–45.

knowledge and made utterly available—so to speak—to the very same cognitive faculty which was concerned with universals. Indeed, in the ontology of the later Burley, universal substantial forms are distinguished from the accidental forms not because their being is identical with that of those singular substances which are their substrates for existence, but rather because they alone are capable of manifesting the deep metaphysical structure of the singular substances themselves. The *type*, which in Burley's earlier writings was only something *exhibited* by the singular substances, is now a reality *distinct* from them, though *not totally separated from nor existentially independent of* them. As a consequence, Burley's theory ends up by putting on the same level substantial and accidental forms and cancelling every qualitative difference in predication. This makes his logical system considerably different from the dominant Aristotelian/Neoplatonic system of the Middle Ages, since for the latter the predicative relation of any sentence (of the form: subject, copula, predicate) must be understood as modally determined by the particular nature of the *predicabile* (species, genus, difference, *proprium*, accident) of the predicate. On the other side, just because of this result, Burley's logical system is the most similar, among the medieval, to the modern ones.

## Appendix 1

*Expositio libri De anima*, lib. III, q. 5. fol. 69rb–vb

Ad primam questionem, <utrum intellectus intelligat singulare>, dicendum quod intellectus accipitur quadrupliciter in hoc libro secundum Commentatorem, scilicet pro virtute cogitativa, pro intellectu agente, pro intellectu materiali, pro intellectu in actu. Si tunc questio intelligatur de intellectu qui est virtus cogitativa dico quod singulare primo intelligitur ab ista virtute, quia primo comprehenditur a virtute <fol. 69va> cogitatitva. Et hoc patet per Philosophum hic, qui vult quod quia intentio individualis et intentio universalis sunt diversa, ideo comprehenduntur per diversas virtutes. Virtus comprehendens universalia est intellectus materialis, et virtus comprehendes singularia est virtus sensitiva, cogitativa, imaginativa. Similiter in secundo huius, commento 62 et 64, dicit Commentator quod virtus cogitativa comprehendit intentiones (universales *scr. sed per puncta expunsit*) individuales uniuscuiusque decem predicamentorum. Et hec virtus cogitativa per ipsum vocatur "intellectus passivus". Unde Commentator commento 20 huius tertii dicit quod Philosophus intelligit per intellectum passibilem virtutem imaginativam. Et Commentator dicit quod Aristoteles vocavit ipsam virtutem cogitativam intellectum passibilem. Sic ergo patet quod intellectus uno modo accipitur pro virtute cogitativa et quod virtus cogitativa cognoscit primo singulare. Et sic singulare primo intelligitur ab intellectu accipiendo intellectum pro virtute cogitativa. Sed accipiendo intellectum pro virtute materiali, sic dico quod universale primo intelligitur ab intellectu et singulare ex consequenti. Et quod singulare intelligatur ab intellectu materiali patet, quia intellectus materialis cognoscit differentiam inter universale et singulare; ergo cognoscit extrema differentie; ergo cognoscit singulare. Singulare ergo cognoscitur ab intellectu materiali ex consequenti et indirecte. Intelligendum quod singulare cognoscitur ab intellectu materiali ex consequenti et indirecte, quia non cognoscitur ab intellectu per suam propriam speciem receptam ab intellectu, sed intellectus intelligit singulare per speciem in sensu. Unde propter coniunctionem intentionis individualis existentis in virtute cogitativa cum intentione universali existente in intellectu materiali potest intellectus cognoscere singulare per speciem singularem existentem in virtute cogitativa.

Ulterius est intelligendum quod intellectus debet esse universalium et sensus singularium, non quia singulare non cognoscitur nisi a sensu, sed quia sensus non cognoscit nisi singulare; tamen cognoscitur ab alio quam a sensu.

Ad primum argumentum patet, quia singulare cognoscitur ab intellectu non per speciem eius receptam in intellectu, sed per speciem eius receptam cum (*pro*: in) virtute cogitativa. Et quando arguitur in contrarium quod intellectus debet assimilari ei quod cognoscit, dico quod intellectus in intelligendo <fol. 69 vb> singulare assimilatur per speciem universalis et etiam per actum intelligendi quem habet circa illud singulare. Unde intellectus magis assimilitar singulari quod intelligit quam singulari quod non intelligit, quia habet actum. Et quando dicitur quod si intellectus in intelligendo singulare non habeat speciem singularem, sed solum speciem universalem, non magis intelligit unum singulare quam aliud, dico quod intellectus precise per speciem universalis non magis intelliget unum

singulare quam aliud, sed intellectus per speciem unius individui existentem in virtute cogitativa cognoscit illum individuum et non cognoscit istud individuum cuius species non existit cum (*pro*: in) virtute cogitativa.

Ad aliud argumentum dicendum quod, quia singulare et universale differunt, ideo virtus comprehendens primo universale et virtus comprehendens primo singulare differunt. Tamen illa eadem virtus que primo et directe comprehendit universale potest ex consequenti et indirecte cognoscere singulare.

Ad aliud, <dico> quod sensus est singularium et intellectus universalium, quia sensus non cognoscit nisi singulare et universale non cognoscitur nisi ab intellectu. Et propter hoc dicitur quod singulare est dum sentitur et universale dum intelligitur.

## Appendix 2

*Expositio libri De anima*, lib. III, q. 6. Fols. 69vb–70ra

Ad secundam questionem <utrum universale sit obiectum intellectus> dicendum quod aliquid dicitur esse primum obiectum tripliciter, scilicet via generationis, via perfectionis et via adequationis. Adhuc dupliciter potest accipi aliquid primum obiectum via generationis: aut in cognitione confusa aut in cognitione distincta. Cognitione confusa est illud primum obiectum intellectus cuius individuum fortius movet sensum. Sed primum obiectum intellectus via generationis cognitione distincta est ens in sua communitate. Ens enim non potest cognosci nisi distincte, quia conceptus entis non potest resolvi in conceptus plures. Primum cognitum via perfectionis est dupliciter: simpliciter vel in comparatione. Primum cognitum via perfectionis simpliciter est prima causa, quia quamvis non cognoscimus eum nisi imperfecte, tamen cognitio modica (*lectio dubia*) quam habemus de ipso est perfectior et nobilior quam cognitio certa de aliis rebus. Primum cognitum in via perfectionis in comparatione est illud quod perfectius cognoscitur a nobis, et illud est universale cuius individuum fortius movet sensum. Primum cognitum via adequationis est obiectum adequatum potentie, et est illud quod continet omnia que cognoscuntur ab illa potentia. Et dico quod ens in sua <fol. 70ra> communitate est isto modo primum obiectum intellectus.

Sed intelligendum est quod obiectum intellectus et etiam obiectum sensus est duplex, scilicet obiectum motivum et obiectum contentivum. Obiectum motivum intellectus est singulare, quia species existens in virtute phantastica est res singularis, et illa movet intellectum. Sed obiectum contentivum est universale continens illa que comprehenduntur a tali potentia.

Ad primum argumentum dicendum quod universale est obiectum intellectus, sed tamen universale non agit in intellectum. (Et *scr. sed del.*) Sed omne agens in intellectu est singulare. Et quando dicitur quod (agens in intellectum *scr. et del.*) obiectum intellectus agit in intellectum, verum est loquendo de obiecto motivo, sed non loquendo de obiecto contentivo. Unde obiectum motivum intellectus est phantasma, et illud agit in intellectum; et obiectum contentivum est universale, et non agit in intellectu, quia actus et operationes sunt singularium. . . . Obiectum intellectus contentivum non agit in intellectum nec generat speciem in intellectu; et ideo non oportet quod si illud obiectum sit singulare quod propter hoc species recepta in intellectu sit singularis.

Ad aliud, quando dicitur quod obiectum intellectus est subiective in intellectu, dico quod hoc non est verum. Nec hoc vult Aristoteles; immo vult quod hoc quod movet intellectum sit subiective in potentia anime. Unde ipse ponit differentiam inter sensum et intellectum in hoc quod illud <quod> movet intellectum est intrinsecus anime, sed illud quod movet sensum non. Unde illud quod movet intellectum est intentio in virtute (i.v. *mg.*) imaginativa, et ita illud quod movet intellectum est intrinsecum anime, quia est in aliqua potentia anime. Sed illud quod movet sensum est extra sensum, nec est in aliqua virtute anime. Et hec est differentia inter sensum et intellectum.

CHAPTER EIGHT

# PHYSICAL FORMS AND MATTER

Elżbieta Jung[1]

As befitting a philosopher of nature educated in Oxford who had spent a long time commenting on Aristotle and reading Averroes, Walter Burley had accepted a number of their physical theses, which were the *communis opinio doctorum* of his times. On the other hand, he was aware that not all physical problems, even those involving the most fundamental concepts, such as matter and form, had been sufficiently explained by his predecessors. The most pertinent of these was the problem of substantial and accidental, especially qualitative change, in which the concepts of matter and form undeniably played a critical role. Therefore, in the study of Burley's ideas concerning the two concepts, one notes both constant and varying elements.

## *Matter*

Burley never changed his concept of prime matter. In one of his last works on natural philosophy, in the *Expositio in libros octo de phisico auditu*, finished most likely in 1334–37,[2] he used the same concept of prime matter that he had accepted in one of his first books on the philosophy of nature, his *De generatione et corruptione* commentary,[3] written most likely during his regency at the Oxford Faculty of Arts in 1302–07.[4] Prime matter is

[1] This chapter is a result of close collaboration with Prof. Marek Gensler, to whom I would like to express my indebtedness for his immense help, conclusive discussion, and relevant materials.

[2] See M. Gensler, *Kłopotliwa zmiana czyli Waltera Burleya zmagania ze zmiennością rzeczy* (Łódź: 2007), 56; E.D. Sylla, "Walter Burley's Practice as a Commentator on Aristotle's *Physics*," *Medioevo* 27 (2002), 335–36, R. Wood, "Walter Burley's *Physics* Commentaries," *Franciscan Studies* 22 (1984), 284–85.

[3] For the edition of the text see Walter Burley, *Commentarius in libros De generatione et corruptione* (hereafter *In De gen.*), in M. Gensler, *Kłopotliwa zmiana*, 205–381.

[4] See Gensler, *Kłopotliwa zmiana*, 64–66.

simple and as such does not possess any substantial form of its own,[5] as Burley clearly states in his treatise *De formis*, written in 1324–26.[6] In his opinion, which agrees with Aristotle, prime matter does not suffer from generation and corruption, since it is an unchanging substrate for forms, which constitute composites with it.[7] All beings are brought into existence when matter is informed and perish when a form is taken away in the process of corruption; matter, however, remains an unchanged subject in all those processes.[8] Furthermore, Burley states that prime matter is numerically the same in all transmutable beings. Thus Aristotle's claim that: "matter is the same in all mutually transmutable being",[9] could be understood in a twofold manner: either that numerically the same matter is informed by various forms at the same time, or that the same matter is successively informed by various forms. The first solution is rejected, since contrary forms would then be present in the same object at the same time and, consequently, no transmutation would be possible, or indeed necessary. The other solution is the right one for him. When, for example, fire is generated from air, the change is possible because there is numerically the same prime matter, which is first informed by the form of air and later by the form of fire.[10]

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[5] See Burley, *De formis*, ed. F.J. Down Scott (Munich: 1970), 7: "Materia prima est illud quod non est resolubile in materiam et formam sed est omnino simplex propter carentiam omnium formarum de sua natura et de sua substantia, ita quod ipsa in sui natura intrinseca nullam formam includit."

[6] See Gensler, *Kłopotliwa zmiana*, 66 and 139.

[7] Cf. Aristotle, *Physics*, I, 9, 192a 2–34; *Metaphysics*, VII, 3, 1029a 18–25.

[8] See Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis Expositio et Quaestiones* (Venice: 1501; repr. Hildesheim: 1972—to be cited as *In Phys.*), fol. 30va: "Materia non est per se generabilis . . . quia omne per se generabile habet subiectum ex quo fit, quia omne generatum habet subiectum existens in potentia . . . ergo si materia prima per se generaretur haberet aliquod subiectum existens in potentia; sed ipsa materia est subiectum ex quo fiunt omnia que fiunt; ergo materia prima est illud ex quo fit prima materia. Et cum illud ex quo fit aliud procedat illud quo fit ex eo, sequitur quod materia prima fit antequam fiat, quod est impossibile. Et sic patet . . . quod materia prima non est per se generabilis. . . . Quod materia prima non sit per se corruptibilis potest eodem modo probari, quia omne quod corrumpitur per se corrumpitur in materiam primam. Si igitur materia prima corrumpatur sequeretur quod corrumpitur in materiam primam; sed illud quod corrumpitur remanet aliquid post corruptionem illius quod in ipsum corrumpitur; ergo materia prima erit postquam corrumpitur, quod est impossibile."

[9] See Aristotle, *De generatione et corruptione*, I, 4, 320a 2–3.

[10] See Burley, *In De gen.*, 214–15: "Ex isto loco accipitur quod materia prima est una numero in omnibus transmutabilibus, quia Philosophus dicit sic in littera: 'Est una omnium materia adinvicem tranmutabilium.' Sed quod una materia numero sit in diversis, hoc potest intelligi dupliciter: uno modo, quod eadem materia numero sit simul in diversis formis; alio modo, quod eadem materia numero sit successive sub diversis formis: nunc sub una forma, iam sub alia. Quod sit eadem materia numero primo modo in omnibus

In his *De generatione* commentary Burley explains that, as a subject of generation, prime matter is called a being in potency (*ens in potentia*), not because it does not exist now and it can exist afterwards, but because it is a potential principle, which along with a substantial form makes up an individual belonging to a species proper to the form. Therefore, being a part of a composed substance, prime matter actually exists as one part of the composite.[11] Only in this way can prime matter be an unchanged substrate of all things. Later, in his treatise *De formis*, Burley specifies the meaning of prime matter as a potency and says that a potency could be understood either as a principle of being, and thus called a subjective

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est impossibile, quia sic formae contrariae essent simul in eodem subiecto numero, et per conseqens non posset esse transmutatio, quia non potest esse aliqua transmutatio nisi inter formas quae non possunt esse in eodem subiecto simul. Sicut sequeretur quod materia prima non esset simul per dimensiones, quia ipsa esset tota in toto et tota in qualibet parte. Verumtamen secundo modo est eadem materia in diversis formis. Si enim ex aere generetur ignis, eadem materia numero, quae prius fuit sub forma aeris, postea est sub forma ignis"; *De formis*, 8–9: "Circa materiam primam est sciendum quod ipsa dicitur esse una numero in omnibus generabilibus et corruptibilibus quod non est sic intelligendum quod eadem materia numero esset simul in omnibus generabilibus et corruptibilibus. Quia, si sic, eadem materia est simul sub forma ignis et sub forma aque et sub forma terrae et ita in eadem materia numero essent simul formae contrariae in summo . . . Ideo intelligendum quod illud commune dictum: 'eadem est materia numero omnium' habet sic intelligi: quod eadem materia numero est successive in omnibus generabilibus et corruptibilibus secundum speciem"; and *In Phys*., fol. 30va: "Et edoem modo debet intelligi illud quod Commentator dicit hic scilicet, quod subiectum quod est in potentia est unum omnium generabilium et corruptibilium, non quia sit eadem materia numero essentialiter omnium generabilium et corruptibilium, sed quia materie omnium generabilium non includunt formas quibus distinguuntur formaliter . . . Unde est intelligendum quod materia prima non est una numero simul in omnibus generabilibus et corruptibilibus, quoniam cum materia prima sit extensa secundum extensionem quantitatis non potest ipsa eadem numero essentialiter simul esse in spera ignis et in spera terre, nec potest idem numero simul esse sub formis contrariis in actu completo; sed qualitates igis et qualitates aque sunt contrarie; ergo etc. Et etiam non potest idem numero essentialiter quiescere sub aliqua forma et transmutari ad eandem, et ideo non est possibile quod eadem materia numero essentialiter sit simul sub omnibus formis generabilium et corruptibilium. Est igitur prima materia eadem numero per privationem distinctionis formalis ut dictum est, et hoc vult Commentator hic dicit quod subiectum quod est in potentia est unum omnium generabilium et corruptibilium."

[11] See Burley, *In De gen*., 226: "Intelligendum quod materia prima, quae est subiectum generationis non dicitur esse ens in potentia, propter hoc, quod nunc non habet esse et postea potest habere esse, quo modo Antichristus dicitur esse ens in potentia; sed materia prima dicitur esse ens in potentia, quia est principium potentiale ex qua et forma componitur individuum de genere substantiae. . . . Alio modo accipiuntur actus et potentia secundum quod sunt principia entis, et isto modo accipitur potentia pro principio potentiali, quod est altera pars compositi, et actus pro principio actuali, ut pro forma, quae est altera pars compositi. Et isto modo loquendo de potentia est materia prima ens in potentia, et illud, quod sic est in potentia actualis, existit. Nihil enim est pars substantiae compositae nisi quod actualiter exisitit."

potency (*potentia subiectiva*), or as a difference in beings, which is called objective potency (*potentia obiectiva*).[12] Of itself, prime matter is a subjective potency, since it exists in beings and is a substrate of a form in the composite, while with respect to forms it is an objective potency (i.e. the object of changes) capable of being informed by different forms successively,[13] since prime matter is released from every form at some time. Thus matter can be characterized by a lack of forms (*privatio*) as well.

In accordance with Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, privation is the third principle of all beings.[14] From the perspective of a potential being, prime matter and privation are indistinguishable, since no being exists without a form. With regard to an object in which they are present, however, they are different in two important ways. First of all, prime matter can be counted with regard to different objects, because matter is a being, though only in composition with form, while *privatio* is a nonbeing (i.e. when one form is found in an object a form opposite to it is absent). Secondly, prime matter constitutes a being per se and privation—only accidentally.[15] When a prime matter and a substantial form compose individuals belonging to the same species, those individuals differ not only because of different accidents and forms, but also because of their different matter. The idea of individuation by matter must have been influenced by Thomas Aquinas, even though Burley does not use his concept of *materia signata quantitate*.[16] Therefore, one can say that a prime matter informed by a

[12] The distinction seems to have been borrowed from John Duns Scotus, who was often an important point of reference for Burley.

[13] Walter Burley, *De formis*, 7: "Potentia subiectiva est illa que existit in rerum natura et est in potentia ad recipiendum formam et ita ut sit subiectum forme et ideo dicitur potentia subiectiva, quia potest esse subiectum forme."

[14] See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1069b, 1070b, 1071a.

[15] Gualterus Burleus, *Expositio in libros octo de physico auditu*, cart. 23rb; "Accidit enim privatio materie, quia materia semper cum habet aliquam formam privatur forma opposita. Et sic privatio et materia sunt unum secundum subiectum, quia dicuntur de eodem subiectum et sunt duo secundum speciem et definitionem. Sed inter privationem et materiam ponitur duplex differentia. Prima est quod materia numeratur inter entia quia est unum ens, et privatio non numeratur inter entia, quia est non ens . . . Secunda differentia est, quia ex materia fit aliquid per se cum sit pars rei, sed ex privatione non fit aliquid per se, sed solum per accidens cum non sit pars rei." Walter Burley, *De formis*, 14: "materia est de se privata forma, quia remoto quolibet agente dante formam materie, materia est privata omni forma et ideo privatio dicitur inesse materie de se, quia inest sibi remoto quolibet agente dante sibi formam, que quidem forma opponitur privationi".

[16] See Thomas de Aquino, *De ente et essentia*, cap. 2.

substantial form of a human that resulted in an individual called Socrates is different from a prime matter "used" to form Plato.[17]

## *Form*

While Burley's theory of matter is more or less a repetition of Aristotle's and Averroes's opinions enriched slightly by the innovative ideas of his Scholastic predecessors, his theory of forms testifies to his originality. First, in his *De generatione* commentary, Burley explains a "mechanism" of informing prime matter by a substantial form distinguishing it from informing by an accidental form. He states that when a substantial form arrives (*adveniat*) at an already existing aggregate of matter of form, for prime matter is always under some act (*sub actu*), it must expel the preceding form in order to inform the matter itself, for two substantial forms cannot coexist in the same (portion of ) prime matter. When, however, an accidental form arrives at an informed being, it merely perfects it, adding new accidental characteristics to the existing substance.[18] In his *De formis* Burley embellishes this explanation. Following the common opinion, he defines two types of forms: a substantial form, which completes matter, and an accidental one, which perfects a being "as such". There is a twofold difference between these forms. First, a substantial form informing matter gives something an absolute act of being (e.g. a rational soul), while completing matter gives it an act of being of a human. By contrast, an accidental form gives a being (e.g. a man) an act of being such and such (e.g. black and tall). Secondly, a substantial form informs prime matter

[17] Walter Burley, *De formis*, 9–10: "Distinctio vero individuorum sub eadem specie est tam per materiam quam per formam quam etiam per accidentia. Verbi gratia: Sortes distinguitur materialiter per materiam suam a Platone distinctione individuali et formaliter per formam suam et accidentaliter per accidentia sua."

[18] See Burley, *In De gen.*, 240: "Ad aliud dico quod formam advenire enti in actu potest intelligi dupliciter: uno modo, quod forma adveniat enti in actu, ita quod adveniat aggregato ex materia et forma tamquam suo perfectibili, et sic non adveniat forma substantialis enti in actu, quia non perficit aliquod aggregatum ex potentia et actu. Alio modo potest intelligi quod forma adveniat enti in actu sic, quod adveniat illi quod est sub actu, et sic omnis forma substantialis advenit enti in actu, quia advenit materiae primae, et materia prima semper est sub actu. Unde per ens in actu possumus intelligere duo: vel illud, quod est sub actu, vel aggregatum ex potentia et actu. Non omne adveniens enti in actu primo modo est accidens; sed omne adveniens enti in actu secundo modo—tamquam perfectio suo perfectibili—est accidens. Et isto modo non advenit foma substantialis enti in actu, quia etsi in materia prima sint accidentia, tamen forma substantialis non perficit aggregatum ex materia et illis accidentibus, sed immediate perficit materiam primam."

which is a subjective potency, whereas an accidental one informs substance composed of prime matter and form, which already exists actually.[19] With respect to the order of time, prime matter receives both substantial form and the accidental ones, namely quantity and quality, at the same time, for in no time can a substance be devoid of quality or quantity; with respect to the order of nature, however, prime matter is first informed by a substantial form and then by accidents, since they are of secondary importance and can be altered while substance remains the same.[20]

A product of the conjunction of prime matter and a substantial form is either a simple body, that is, an element, or a composite body (i.e. any individual of the sublunary world). The former results in generation of four different types of substances—fire, air, water, and earth—each of which is informed by a combination of two out of two pairs of opposing primary qualities: coldness and hotness, and dryness and humidity. The latter produce composite bodies (*mixta*) of various kinds, inanimate bodies (e.g. rocks or minerals), and animate bodies of vegetative, animal, or human form, each of which contains all elements but has its specific combination of them, even though a production of a composite body can start from a single element as when, for example, a mineral is produced in earth. A substantial form of a *mixtum* is introduced straight into the prime

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[19] See Burley, *De formis*, 10: "Adhuc circa formam perficientem materiam est sciendum quod quedam forma perficiens materiam est substantialis et quedam est accidentalis et inter has formas est duplex differentia. Prima est quod forma substantialis dat esse simpliciter composito cuius est forma. Sed forma accidentalis dat esse secundum quid seu esse tale. Verbi gratia: forma substantialis hominis dat homini esse simpliciter et quod sit homo. . . . Sed forma accidentalis dat esse secundum quid, ut esse talem vel tantum vel huiusmodi. Verbi gratia: albedo adveniens Sorti non dat Sorti quod habeat esse simpliciter nec quod sit homo, sed solummodo quod sit talis, scilicet, albus; et quantitas dat Sorti esse quantum, non esse simpliciter; et relatio dat ei quod sit ad aliud; et sic de aliis. . . . Secunda differentia inter formam substantialem et accidentalem est quod forma substantialis perficit immediate materiam primam, sed forma accidentalis perficit immediate materiam compositam. Et hoc est quod sub aliis verbis dicitur quod forma substantialis advenit enti in potentia et forma accidentalis enti in actu—quod intelligendum est de ente in potentia subiectiva, cuiusmodi est materia prima, . . . et de ente in actu formali, cuiusmodi est compositum ex materia et forma" [punctuation is mine].

[20] See ibid., 11: "Sic est de materia prima, cui immediate adheret forma substantialis, deinde composito ex materia prima et forma substantiali advenit quantitas, deinde toti composito ex materia prima, forma substantiali et quantitate advenit qualitas, et sic de aliis accidentibus secundum ordinem. Et forma substantialis immediate advenit materie prime, et sic enti in potentia, et forma accidentalis immediate advenit substantie composite, et <sic> enti in actu. . . . Materia prima simul tempore recipit formam substantialem et quantitatem et qualitatem. Prius tamen natura recipit formam substantialem quam qualitatem vel quantitatem. Et tamen materia prima et forma substantialis, quantitas et qualitas sunt simul in eodem situ adequato" [punctuation is mine].

matter.[21] On the other hand, a substantial form of composite bodies is an intermediary form, since it unifies the elementary forms in such a way that the elementary forms are contained in it not in their proper acts but *in virtute*.[22] It is more perfect than particular elements as it includes the power (*virtus*) of every element and preserves their qualities, albeit in a remiss degree, since elementary qualities are opposed to one another.

From the point of view of a metaphysician, a substantial change can be presented as a generation of a single substantial form in prime matter; for a natural philosopher, however, it involves a complex process in which a generation of a substantial form is accompanied by at least one more change (i.e. a qualitative one).[23] This is best seen in the generation of elements. When fire is produced out of water, this happens as a result of a process in which water is being heated. The quality of hotness is gradually intensified to the point in which it is no longer compossible with the substantial form of water. Then the substantial form is destroyed and a new form is introduced.[24] The interrelation between qualitative and substantial changes is stressed most strongly in the *Tractatus primus*, where Burley argues that a qualitative change may be a cause of a substantial

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[21] See Burley, *In De gen.*, 325: "Ad aliud dicendum quod forma substantialis mixti recipitur in materia prima immediate. Et quando dicitur quod tunc ex uno elemento posset generari mixtum, dicendum quod ex uno elemento tamquam ex termino a quo bene potest generari mixtum. Nam in materiam unius elementi potest induci forma mixti per actionem alicuius mixti, et erit generatio univoca. Unde minerae generatae iuxta centrum terrae generantur ex uno elemento tamquam ex termino a quo. Tamen ex uno elemento tamquam ex efficiente non potest generari mixtum; unum enim elementum non sufficit ad producendum mixtum."

[22] Ibid., 322–23: "Quando igitur nullum elementum ad plenum dominatur alteri, ita quod inducat dispositiones omnino convenientes suae formae, sed sunt in quadam dispositione media quae non est ad plenum proportionata formae alicuius elementi, et ista forma media continet formas elementorum in virtute. . . . Cum dicitur quod elementa manent in mixto in virtute, . . . dicitur quod elementa manent in mixto in virtute propter hoc quod mixtum habet consimilem virtutem virtutibus elementorum, nam a qualitatibus mixtis possunt procedere consimiles operationes, quales procedunt a qualitatibus elementorum. . . . Ideo dicitur quod elementa manent in mixto in virtute, quia mixtum habet virtutes consimiles virtutibus omnium quattuor elementorum, non quia substantiae elementorum manent in mixto nec etiam qualitates elementorum, sed quia virtutes consimiles." For a detailed discussion about relation between elements in a composite body see below, Chapter Nine, 267–299.

[23] See Burley, *In Phys.*, fol. 24vb: "Generatio necessario consequitur alterationem."

[24] See Burley, *Tractatus primus de activitate, unitate et augmento formarum habentium contraria et suscipientium magis et minus*, MS Vat. lat. 817, fol. 206vb: "Primus et principalis et immediatus effectus caloris est alteratio. Effectus autem mediatus et per modum sequele est forma substantialis. Et ideo oportet quod calor contineat virtualiter totam alterationem precedentem inductionem forme substantialis, sed non oportet quod contineat virtualiter formam substantialem."

change, which serves as its *terminus ad quem*.[25] Although the two types of change always happen together in nature, alteration and generation are, nevertheless, two distinct processes concerning two different categories of being. In his *De generatione* commentary, and later in the *Physics* commentaries, Burley defines the two types of changes, placing generation of elements between them as an intermediary type. The substantial change is a change of a "whole into a whole". This is so because substance as such is indivisible and does not admit any grade and, therefore, it cannot undergo change "part after part", for it either is the same substance or is no more. The subject of these kind of changes, both generation and corruption, is prime matter.[26] In this way only composite bodies undergo a substantial change. Generations are of four main different kinds: the *generatio simplex absoluta*, namely the generation of a substance, which is an autonomous and independent being; the *generatio quaedam absoluta*, namely the generation of an accident, which is a diminute being, since it is an inhering being and exists in the substance and by means of the substance; the *generatio simplex respectiva*, namely the generation of a more noble being from a less noble one; and the *generatio quaedam respectiva*, namely the generation of a less noble being from a more noble one.[27]

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[25] See Ibid., fol. 203vb: "Quicquid est terminus unius alterationis est terminus alterius, quia tota alteratio precedens inductionem forme substantialis non terminatur citra inductionem forme substantialis ut patet cuilibet intelligenti. Ergo sunt eadem mutatio cum neutra includit aliquid per quod possit ab altera distingui."

[26] See Burley, *In De gen.*, 234–35: "Unde in alteratione manet aliquod subiectum unum sensatum, scilicet aliqua substantia composita, sub utroque termino alterationis. Verbi gratia: si aqua alteratur ad caliditatem, aliquod subiectum sensatum—scilicet aqua, quae est una substantia composita—manet sub utroque termino alterationis: nunc sub frigiditate, iam sub caliditate. Sed non est sic in generatione, ut si ex spermate fiat homo, non manet aliquod subiectum sensatum sub utroque terminorum, sed solum materia prima. Unde generatio est transmutatio totius in totum, ita quod in generatione substantiae non manet aliquod individuum substantiae in principio generationis et in fine."

[27] See ibid., 232: "Similiter in generationibus accidentium est aliqua generatio simplex respective, ut si calidum sit habitus et frigidum privatio, generatio calidi est generatio simplex et generatio frigidi est generatio quaedam. Ratio autem quare generatio entis nobilioris dicitur simplex respective est, quia, ex quo generatio est ad ens, illa generatio debet esse simplex et nobilior, quae est ad ens nobilius. Unde sicut ens nobilius dicitur simpliciter ens respectu entis vilioris, sic generatio entis nobilioris dicitur esse generatio simpliciter respectu generationis entis vilioris." See also Burley, *Commentarium in Librum sex principiorum*, MS Cambridge Gonville and Caius 448/409, fol. 87a–b: "Et intelligendum est quod duplex est generatio, scilicet <generatio> simplex et generatio quedam, et utraque dicitur dupliciter: absolute et in respectu. Generatio simplex absoluta est generatio cuiuscumque substantie indifferenter. Generatio quedam absoluta est generatio cuiuscumque accidentis indifferenter. Generatio simplex respectiva <est> quandocumque ex minus nobili fit magis nobile, sive in substantia sive in accidentibus. In substantiis, ut si ex terra fiat ignis; in accidentibus, ut si ex immusica fiat musica. Generatio quedam

Speaking about forms Burley cannot escape the problem of their character, which is peculiar not only to every category, but also to their subordinate genera. Apart from the distinction into substantial, qualitative, quantitative, and local forms, he introduces another, "technical" distinction into indivisible and divisible forms. According to a common opinion dating back to Aristotle,[28] there are forms that are indivisible and ones that have a variable latitude. While talking about them he describes changes using a vocabulary characteristic of the 14th-century natural philosophers, namely such concepts as: *latitudo, gradus, intensio, remissio, incipit, desinit*. In his early quodlibetal question *De primo et ultimo instanti*, disputed in Toulouse ca. 1319,[29] Burley presents his own, original definition of the two different types of forms. Substantial forms are all indivisible and change instantaneously. Quantities and places, however, can change successively, even though they are indivisible. In a change that has a successive character, the indivisible form is always destroyed before another one is introduced. Such a change only seems to be a change of a degree. On the other hand, the forms that have latitudes (i.e. most qualitative forms), remain in the same species even though their degree changes. It is worth noting that Burley makes one exception to the rule concerning qualitative changes that admit degrees: the maximum degree of a quality.[30] Such a degree is treated as an indivisible form. Indivisible forms have both the first and a last instance of their existence, since they are present only in a moment. Divisible forms, on the other hand, have the first moment of their existence but they do not have the last one, since they exist only

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respectiva est quandocumque ex magis nobili generatur minus nobile, sive in substantiis sive in accidentibus. Et opposito modo est de corruptione." For a detailed explanation of the problem see Gensler, *Kłopotliwa zmiana*, 65–82.

[28] See Aristotle, *Categories*, Chapters 5–8, where the Stagirite affirms that substances, quantities, and some relatives do not appear to admit of variation of degree, while qualities, *qualia*, and many relatives do.

[29] See Gensler, *Kłopotliwa zmiana*, 65, n. 116.

[30] See "*De primo et ultimo instanti* des Walter Burley," ed. H. Shapiro and Ch. Shapiro, *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, 47 (1965), 165: "Si autem loquitur de forma permanente positiva durante per tempore, in esse et conservari non dependet a re successiva, adhuc huiusmodi est duplex: quia vel ista forma habet latitudinem in gradibus ita quod corrupto suo gradu potest forma remanere eodem simul sub alio gradu; vel ista forma importat talem perfectionem secundum gradum punctualem. Exemplum primi sicut ignis, aer, aqua; omnia ista habent latitudinem in gradibus. Accidentia enim praedicta et similia habent latitudinem per se graduum . . . Exemplum secundi: in motus locali ubi in loco signato in quo mobile est in principio motus vel in medio. Similiter bicubicum, tricubicum in motu augmenti. Similiter calidissimum, frigidissimum et omnis huiusmodi gradus in motu alterationis, omnia ista dicunt perfectionem in indivisibili consistentem."

until the very last moment that precedes the introduction of a new one, which has the first instance of its being.[31]

A special case is the problem of latitude in the generation of composite bodies out of elements. In his *De generatione* commentary Burley follows what E.D. Sylla calls the standard medical-philosophical concept,[32] claiming that there is a latitude characterizing an adequacy of qualities of elements that also by their proper latitude admit of more or less, and Burley then states that in an intermediary form of a composite body (*mixtum*), forms like hotness or coldness, which are dispositions of the elements, are divisible and can vary between the limits of maximum and minimum degree.[33] On the other hand, forms of elements are contained

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[31] See ibid., 169–70: "Si loquamur de re positiva cuius perfectio consistit in indivisibili, dico quod est dare ultimum instans in quo talis res habet esse. Cuius ratio est, quia perfectio consistent in indivisibili, si corrupatur, non aliquid eius corrumpitur vel minuitur remanente eadem perfectione. Ideo si aliquid contrarium vel aliquid potens ipsum corrumpere approximetur, in primo instanti in quo agens potens corrumpere approximatur, ista perfectio est, et postea non est . . . Rei permanentis habentis latitudinem in gradibus sue perfecionis non est dare ultimum instans sue perfectionis. Et ratio est, quia est dare primum instans in quo forma sequens habet esse, quia forma sequens est terminus alterationis per quod corrumpitur forma precedens, et est dare primum instans in quo terminus alterationis habet esse."

[32] In Sylla's opinion Galen should be given the credit for originating the concept of latitude of forms. He claims—as Sylla reports—that "there is a latitude of health which is divided into three parts, each in turn having some latitude". Later Avicenna "used the concept of latitude to express his view that the human *complexio* does not correspond to a single proportion of elements or qualities, but that the parts of intensities can vary somewhat and still correspond to a human *complexio*. Elements too he said can vary their qualities within a latitude without the corruption of the element. Averroes also used the term 'latitude' in the same sense in discussing *complexiones*"—see. E.D. Sylla, "Medieval concepts of the latitudes of forms: the Oxford Calculators," *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Ages* 39 (1973), 226–27, and 233.

[33] See Burley, *In De gen.*, 316: "Intelligendum quod ad hoc quod fiat mixtio non oportet miscibilia omnino adaequari, sed illa adaeqatio de qua loquitur Philosophus consistit in quadam latitudine"; 325: "Modo sanitas non sic consistit in adaequatione humorum quod oportet omnes humores esse omnino adaequatos, sed illa adaequatio habet latitudinem. Si enim consisteret in esse punctuali, aut nullus esset sanus, aut pauci. Et sic consistit mixtum in adaequatione elementorum habentes latitudinem"; 359–60: "Hic ostendit Philosophus quale medium debet esse in mixtione et vult quod huiusmodi medium non est medium punctuale, sed consistit in quadam latitudine. Non enim oportet quod elementa sint omnia adaequata in mixto, sed in tantum quod nullum elementum dominetur ad plenum supra alterum, ita quod posset ipsum corrumpere et reducere ad sui naturam. Unde sicut sanitas consistit in adaequatione humorum, quae adaequatio non est punctualis, sed habet latitudinem, sic mixtio consistit in quadam adaequatione miscibilium habentium latitudinem. Commentator dicit hic quod neutrum miscibilium dominatur simpliciter, quando ex hiis generatur aliquod medium, sed tamen declinabit ad partem dominantis; et ideo hoc medium, cum eo quod est dominans ad alterum duorum extremorum, habet aliquam latitudinem recipientem magis et minus. Ex hoc apparebit impossibile esse aliquam complexionem mediam temperatam quam ponit Galienus. Haec Commentator."

in the composite not by their proper acts but only *in virtute*, which means that no gradation of them is possible.[34] One finds a similar opinion in Burley's first version of the *Physics* commentary, too. Here Burley says that the degrees of form characterize properly specific qualitative forms only, because they are not found in either generic or individual ones, which do not admit of more or less as they do not have opposites, which are necessary for forms to possess degrees. However, one can distinguish two other senses, in which we speak of a degree, either comparing a form to a subject, in which it is (when a subject is larger, the form follows its extension), or comparing it to a subject of certain actions or operations (a subject can exhibit stronger or weaker dispositions to some action).[35]

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[34] See ibid., 322: "Mixtum enim generatur ex elementis adaequatis in potentiis. Quando igitur nullum elementum ad plenum dominatur alteri, ita quod inducat dispositiones omnino convenientes suae formae, sed sunt in quadam dispositione media quae non est ad plenum proportionata formae alicuius elementi, et ista forma media continet formas elementorum in virtute."

[35] See Burley, *Expositio librorum Physicorum* (ante 1316), quaestio: "utrum ad qualitatem sit motus," MS Gonville and Caius College 448/409, 384b–386b (Sylla's transcription): "Sed qualiter qualitas suscipiat magis et minus est dubium, circa quod sunt quatuor consideranda. Primum est de modo suscipiendi magis et minus. . . . Et quartum que forme suscipiunt magis et minus et que non, utrum, scilicet una qualitas numero suscipiat magis et minus vel una qualitas genere vel una qualitas specie. Circa primum sciendum quod modus suscipiendi magis et minus in qualitate est ex hoc quod qualitas secundum suam essentiam nata est habere diversos gradus et non ex hoc quod qualitas potest participari a subiecto secundum magis et minus . . . forma /p. 385a/ in se considerata suscipit magis et minus. Unde breviter dico quod qualitas principaliter secundum suam essentiam habet magis et minus, sed secundario et ex consequenti dicitur suscipere magis et minus per participationem subiecti, in quantum a subiecto participatur sub gradu perfectiori vel imperfectiori. Unde forma que suscipit magis et minus consideratur tripliciter: uno modo in se; alio modo in comparatione ad subiectum in quo est; tertio in comparatione ad istud in quod agit vel circa quod operatur, si sit potentia activa vel principium operationis. Et primo et principaliter attenditur magis et minus secundum essentiam ipsius forme, secundo per participationem ipsius in subiecto, tertio secundum actionem ipsius in aliud, ut sit ordo talis: quia forma secundum se habet magis et minus, ideo participatur secundum magis et minus in subiecto, et ex hoc sequitur quod sit principium agendi magis et minus. . . . Circa quartum intelligendum quod nulla forma proprie suscipit magis et minus, nisi forma specifica. Forma enim una secundum genus non suscipit magis et minus proprie, nec forma una numero suscipit magis et minus. Ergo forma una secundum speciem solum suscipit magis et minus. Quod forma una secundum genus non suscipiat magis et minus proprie patet, quia generi non est aliquid contrarium, secundum quod vult Albertus, quinto *Physicorum*. Dicit enim: 'Nulla contrarietas est in genere, sed in specie. Color enim in genere non habet contrarium, cum omnium contrariorum sit idem genus.' Hoc ille. Patet ergo quod generi nihil est contrarium, quia contraria debent esse in eodem genere. Cum ergo contrarietas sit causa susceptionis magis et minus, patet quod forma que solum est una secundum genus non debet suscipere magis et minus. Etsi enim aliquid dicatur magis albus quam aliud, nihil tamen dicitur magis quale quam aliud, nec magis coloratum quam aliud, quia color in genere non habet contrarium. Quod autem una forma secundum numerum non suscipiat magis et minus patet, quia si sic, una forma numero

Apparently, Burley's ideas concerning latitudes of forms remain the same also in his *Tractatus primus*, in which, according to Sylla's opinion, he offers a concept of latitude similar to that of Galen and Avicenna, "when he asserts . . . that some subjects determine their active qualities to be of only a single degree while others may have qualities whose degrees are within a certain latitude".[36] Here Burley maintains that qualities of elements need not to be only in maximum degree, but that they may also have other degrees without changing their nature.[37] Furthermore, he claims that contrary forms like coldness and hotness or blackness and whiteness belong to the same *species specialissima*.[38] In his *Tractatus secundus de intensione et remisione formarum accidentalium* Burley looks again for the precise meaning of intension and remission of forms and after a long debate he concludes that a latitude of a *species* is an intrinsic cause of intension and remission.[39] It seems that Burley repeats there the opinion from his first commentary on the *Physics*, claiming that indivisible forms are primary causes of a variety of qualities. This time, however,

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posset habere diversos gradus. Sed hoc est impossibile, quia nulla qualitas una numero potest habere diversos gradus. Quod patet per rationem et per auctoritates. Per rationem sic: a qualitate sub gradu remissiori ad qualitatem sub /386b/ gradu intensiori potest esse motus. Si ergo eadem qualitas numero maneat sub gradu intensiori et remissiori, alteratio posset esse ab eadem qualitate ad eandem qualitatem. Sed hoc est impossibile, quia termini alterationis sunt oppositi. Si ergo alteratio esset ab eodem ad idem, idem opponeretur sibi ipsi. Et si dicatur quod motus non est ad qualitatem illam que modo est sub gradu remisso et iam sub gradu intenso, sed est ab uno gradu in aliam, et ibi gradus sunt oppositi, istud non valet, quia quero: aut gradus qualitatis sit qualitas vel non. Si non, alteratio est ad gradum. Et sequitur quod alteratio non est ad qualitatem, quod est contra Philosophum, quinto *Physicorum*. Si ille gradus sit qualitas, cum in alteratione in quolibet instanti sit alius gradus et alius, sequitur quod in alteratione in quolibet instanti est alia qualitas et alia. Et hoc est propositum."

[36] Sylla, "Medieval Concepts," 235.

[37] See Burley, *Tractatus primus*, fol. 206rb: "Manifestum est quod aqua potest esse etsi non sit frigida in summo, et ignis etiam potest esse etsi non sit calidus in summo."

[38] See ibid., fol. 203ra: "Forme contrarie, videlicet calor et frigus, albedo et nigredo, sunt eiusdem speciei specialissime."

[39] See Burley, *Tractatus secundus*, MS Florence, Bibl. Marucelliana, C. 163, fol. 56va–vb: "Unde concesso quod forma existens in subiecto suscipit magis et minus, adhuc restat querere que est causa huiusmodi quod talis forma existens in subiecto suscipit magis et minus. Non est dicere quod hec est causa, quia existit in subiecto, quia tunc omnis forma existens in subiecto susciperet magis et minus—quod falsum est. Ergo oportet aliam causam assignare. Et sic ista distinctio, scilicet quod forma potest considerari vel secundum essentiam vel secundum esse, nihil est ad propositum. Ideo mihi videtur quod causa intrinseca intensionis et remissionis est latitudo forme specifice, /56vb/ ut quia eadem species forme potest salvari in forma magis perfecta et in forma minus perfecta. Ideo una forma potest esse intensior alia eiusdem speciei et alia remissior; non tamen potest eadem forma secundum numerum aliquando esse intensior alia eiusdem speciei et alia remissior, ut visum est supra."

those individual forms are degrees of qualities, which differ numerically.[40] Here Burley presents his earlier opinion from another perspective by saying that since any change of degree causes a change in an individual existing quality, a latitude of degrees is relevant only to species of forms and not to an individual form. Therefore, Sylla concludes that: "the latitude as Burley ultimately understands it, is the abstract or conceptual range determined by various degrees of a species of quality that may be found in particular instances. As these statements indicate, a latitude for Burley is an intensive range within which the degrees of the individuals of a species may vary. The degrees of the latitude are indivisible and may correspond to actually existing forms or qualities. The latitude itself, while it describes the range within which the degrees of the species may fall, has no separate existence aside from the individuals of the species."[41]

## *Change*

The problem of change was Burley's favorite field of study. Without much exaggeration, it can be said that the issues concerning matter and form were important for him only inasmuch as they were necessary for explaining generation, corruption, alteration, augmentation, and local motion. He analyzed the problem of change in his works composed over a period of some 40 years from his studies in Oxford to the final days of his intellectual activity. Some of his ideas underwent various changes and refinements in the process of debates and discussions with his colleagues in Oxford, Paris, and elsewhere, others formed a solid core relatively early and were repeated in consecutive works or were simply taken for granted.

The constant part of Burley's views on elementary and organic change, which appeared here and there in his works in natural philosophy, can be summarized as follows. Prime matter, devoid of definite dimensions, is first informed by primary qualities, of which heat is the first among equals. Its activity causes both generation and corruption; it is necessary for life

[40] See ibid.: "Et si dicatur quod gradus non est quedam forma, contra: gradus vel est in subiecto vel non est in subiecto. Si non est in subiecto, tunc est substantia, quia descriptio substantie est ens non in subiecto; et ita, cum per motum ad formam continue acquiratur alius et alius gradus, sequitur quod per motum ad formam continue acquiratur nova et nova substantia—quod est inconveniens. Si vero ille gradus sit in subiecto, tunc actuat et informat subiectum; et per consequens est quedam forma, quia subiectum est materia in qua est talis gradus; ergo gradus est forma illius subiecti."

[41] See Sylla, "Medieval Concepts," 234.

but brings about death too. These various forms of action are related to various types of heat: celestial, elementary, and animal. The three types do not differ from one another in their natures, on the contrary: they share the same nature and the differences are attributed to intensity in their action, which in turn is dependent on the source of heat.[42] The bodies of inanimate beings, such as minerals, are constituted from elements under the influence of celestial heat.[43] In animate beings, the process is more complex, for it requires the concurrence of three parties: the form of a generated being, say an animal, comes in semen from the male parent, matter is provided by the female parent, and solar heat is a necessary condition for the creation of a new life.[44] Semen is a form that exists only during the process of generation passing the nature to the newly formed being; in the same vein, an embryo remains a *quasi*-part of a mother until a vegetative soul is formed in it.[45]

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[42] See Burley, *Tractatus primus*, fol. 209ra–b: "Calor non est subiective in celo, cum celum non recipiat peregrinas impressiones; calor ergo dicitur esse celestis quia est a celo effective; sed calor elementaris /209rb/ est a celo effective; ergo calor celestis et calor elementaris idem sunt. Et eadem ratione calor animalis est idem cum istis. Et per consequens non differunt specie. Quod autem calor elementaris sit effective a celo apparet per Philosophum, I *Metheorum*, qui dicit quod causa effectiva omnium dispositionum hic inferius est corpus celeste et causa ut materia sunt quattuor elementa. . . . Cum ergo ignis in calefaciendo patitur, apparet quod ignis non est primum calefaciens sed corpus celeste. Cum ergo primum in omni genere sit causa posteriorum sequitur quod celum est causa effectiva caloris ignis. Et sic calor ignis est calor celestis, quia est effective a celo. . . . Pro istis rationibus est intelligendum quod calor in gradu in quo est conveniens complexioni animalis dicitur calor animalis, et secundum quod est a celo effective vel secundum quod mensuratur et habet terminum a celo, dicitur calor celestis, et secundum quod est ab igne dicitur calor elementaris. . . . Sicut ergo non est alius calor ille qui est ignis et ille calor qui est artis quo artifex utitur, nec mollificatio que est ab igne est alia ab illa que habet terminum et mensuram ab arte, ita non est alius calor animalis qui est conveniens complexioni animalis et qui est igneus digerens alimentum, et qui habet terminum vel mensuram a celo vel ab anima."

[43] See Burley, *In De gen.*, 325–26: "Minerae generatae iuxta centrum terrae generantur ex uno elemento tamquam ex termino a quo. Tamen ex uno elemento tamquam ex efficiente non potest generari mixtum; unum enim elementum non sufficit ad producendum mixtum."

[44] See Burley, *De Potentia Activa et Passiva*, ed. H. Shapiro and F. Scott, *The Modern Schoolman* 43 (1966), 180: "Calor naturalis in animali est principium transmutandi alimentum et sic est principium augmentationis, quae est in praedicamento quantitatis. Potentia generativa in homine est principium transmutandi materiam seminis ad prolem, et hoc est in substantia."

[45] See Burley, *De formis*, 38–39: "Embrio primo vivit vita plantae, hoc est in embrione prius apparet operatio potentiae vegetative quam potentiae sensitivae et prius apparet operatio animae sensitivae in embrione quam operatio animae intellectivae. Simul tamen inducuntur potentiae vegetative, sensitive et intellective. Nec sunt iste tres potentiae diversae animae sed sunt diversae potentiae eiusdem animae. Et si dicatur quod embrio prius

Animate beings need food both for preservation of life and growth. In the process of nutrition, the form of food is destroyed in such a way that animal heat digests the humidity of the food, which brings about the destruction of its substantial form. The matter is then immediately informed by the substantial form of the animal.[46] Subsequent physiological processes are dependent on the quantity of digested food. If it is sufficient, an animal preserves its life in its perfection or, if it has not reached its perfection yet, it grows. If it is insufficient, the animal's heat starts digesting its own humidity, which causes shrinking of the body and may bring about death. If it is superfluous, an animal not only preserves its form (regardless of the stage of its development) but puts on weight: this is a process in which the excess food is converted into new parts of the body. It is different from growth, in which no new parts are produced.[47] Both putting up weight and growth, however, produce a secondary change in the extension of a body, which occupies larger space as a result of each. Unlike the former two processes, the change in extension is continuous, for space is infinitely divisible and bodies are composed of *minima naturalia*.[48]

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tempore nutritur, augmentatur, formatur et figuratur quam habet sensum et intellectum, quia anima intellectiva non infunditur, ut communiter dicitur, ante sextum mensem a tempore conceptionis et tunc diu ante nutritur et augmentatur, . . . dicendum est quod prius tempore nutritur, augmentatur et formatur quam habeat aliquam animam. Et iste operationes sunt ab anima vegetativa matris et non ab anima propria vegetativa."

[46] See Burley, *In De gen.*, 247: "Cum igitur illud cui adveniet alimentum, maneat et alimentum non, patet quod alimentum non augetur, sed illud cui advenit alimentum. Unde illud quod convertit aliquid in sui naturam, augetur; sed illud quod corrumpitur, non augetur."

[47] See ibid., 268: "Intelligendum tamen quod quandoque bene contingit quod per alimentum adveniens generatur nova caro, sed per generationem novae carnis non fit augmentatio. Verbi gratia, senes quando fiunt pingues, non augmentantur. Si tamen forma praeexistens fieret in pluri materia quam prius, senes augmentarentur, quando fiunt pinguiores. Unde respondeo quod, quando aliquis pinguescit, nova caro generatur in eo. Et hoc possumus sensibiliter videre in animalibus pinguibus; ibi enim sensibiliter apparet quod caro nova ponitur iuxta carnem antiquam. Dico igitur, quod in augmentatione materia alimenti fit sub forma aucti."

[48] See Burley, *In Phys.*, fol. 25ra: "Intelligendum quod de intentione Commentatoris hic est quod omnis forma substantialis divisibilis acquiritur partibiliter, et hoc sive sit divisibilis extensive, scilicet in partes quantitativas, sive sit divisibilis intensive, id est secundum magis et minus, sicut forme elementorum sunt secundum ipsum. . . . Ponendo minimum naturale, ut ponit Commentator, oportet dicere quod non omnis forma substantialis partibilis acquiritur partibiliter, ita quod una pars quantitativa acquiratur ante aliam. Sed omnis substantialis forma in partes actuales, que scilicet possunt existere per se, acquiritur partibiliter; sed huiusmodi non est minimum naturale." For details on Burley's theory of augmentation see Gensler, *Kłopotliwa zmiana*, 69–175.

The changing part of Burley's doctrine of change is the problem of intension and remission. In his physical works, Burley devoted much attention and time to this issue by presenting several complementary solutions. In his early commentaries on the *De generatione et corruptione* and *Physics*, he saw a qualitative change as a process occurring between specifically contrary forms within the same genus.[49] He noted that the process can be broken down into infinite individual instantaneous stages. In *De primo et ultimo instanti*, he presented an explanation of differences between two modes of understanding qualities undergoing change of intensity: one, seen as a process, and the other, seen as an instant.[50] The most complete and original exposition of Burley's views on the problem of change can be found in the *Tractatus primus*. The process of qualitative changes is involved here in a theological context of transubstantiation.[51] At the beginning of the treatises Burley draws four conclusions: (1) an acting alone quality alone can produce a substantial form by its own virtue (2) there is no additional agent required to induce a substantial form at an instant; (3) celestial, elemental, and animal heat are the same in case of ultimate species; (4) contrary forms belong to the same species.[52] All substantial and accidental changes can thus be explained only by means of qualities and their actions.[53] "More specific issues behind Burley's arguments concerning his four major conclusions"—as Sylla says—"lead to the following theory. During a process of transformation, a remission of the qualities of a patient is caused by the opposite qualities of an acting agent intense them. Since qualities act as dispositions to the reception

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[49] See above, n. 34.

[50] See above, n. 29.

[51] The most elaborated study on Burley's *Tractatus primus* is the second chapter of Sylla's *The Oxford Calculators and Mathematics of Motion 1320–1350. Physics and Measurement by Latitudes* (New York: 1991), 71–95. See also Sylla, "Walter Burley's *Physics* Commentaries and the Mathematics of Alteration," *Early Science and Medicine* 6.3 (2001), 149–84; and "Walter Burley's Practice as a Commentator on Aristotle's *Physics*," *Medioevo* 27 (2002), 301–72.

[52] See Burley, *Tractatus primus*, fol. 203ra: "Prima <conclusio est> quod qualitas in virtute propria potest producere formam contrahibilem, vel in virtute propria <potest> esse principium tale producendi forme substantialis . . . Secunda conclusio . . . fuit quod in instanti inductionis subite forme substantialis in materia non requiritur agens pro tunc inducens formam. Tertia conclusio est quod isti tres calores, . . . scilicet calor celestis, elementaris et animalis, sunt eiusdem speciei atome. Quarta quod forme contrarie, videlicet calor et frigus, albedo et nigredo, sunt eiusdem speciei specialissime."

[53] See Sylla, *The Oxford Calculators and Mathematics of Motion 1320–1350*, Appendix, 472–520.

of a substantial form, the processes of intensification of the qualities of a patient go up to a degree at which a substantial change occurs. The final degree of a quality, corresponding to a new substantial form, however, is not more a part of a qualitative change. It is induced in the last instant of change, when a patient receives a substantial form of an agent."[54] In Burley's opinion, the qualities, which undergo intension and remission, are all—as Sylla and Shapiro claim[55]—sensible qualities and they have to produce an observable effect (e.g. if a body contains a quality of hotness it must be felt hot). It seems, therefore, that this point of view is a chief reason for his severe criticism of two other famous theories of intension and remission of forms, namely admixture and addition theory. The former explains a process of remission of one quality (e.g. hot by admixture of its opposite quality—cold) when both of the oppositions are present in the same body at the same time. The latter states that a rise of degrees of a quality in a subject is caused by successive addition of either parts of a quality or degrees.[56] Already in his *Tractatus primus* Burley put a lot of effort into revealing an inconsistency of the admixture theory. Three-quarters of his *Tractatus secundus* contains arguments and opinions against the adherents of these two, above-mentioned theories. Against this background Burley offers his own, original solution of the problem of intention and remission of forms commonly known as a succession of forms theory.[57] His theory is presented in three short conclusions: (1) in every qualitative alteration (*motus ad formam*), something new which is either a form or a part of a form is acquired; (2) in every motion the whole of the preceding is destroyed, and a totally new form is acquired, nothing of which was previously; (3) no form is intended or remitted, but the subject of form is intended and remitted with respect to the form, so that the

[54] Ibid., 77.

[55] See ibid., 196; and H. Shapiro, "Walter Burley and the Intension and Remission of Forms," *Speculum* 34 (1959), 419.

[56] The most elaborated works on different theories of intension and remission of forms are still A. Maier, *Zwei Grundprobleme de scholatischen Naturphilosophie*: *Das Problem der intensiven Grösse* (Rome: 1951); and Sylla, *The Oxford Calculators and Mathematics of Motion 1320–1350* (see n. 51 above).

[57] Walter Burley's counterarguments against the addition theory became quite popular. Nicolas Oresme comprises the refutation of Burley's arguments and presents it in his commentary on the *Physics*, q. 7—see St. Kirschner, *Nicolaus Oresme Kommentator zur Physik des Aristotle. Kommentar mit Edition der Quaestiones zu Buch 3 und 4 der aristotelischen Physik sowie von Questionen zu Buch* 5 (Stuttgart: 1997), 402–05.

form is that in respect of which a subject is intended or remitted.[58] Like in his *Tractatus primus* also here Burley keeps saying that a quality must be sensed, and thus during the process of change, a totally new quality must be inducted in each moment of time. Such a new quality would be either more intense than the one existing in the instance before, in case of a process of augmentation, or more remiss in a process of diminishing. In order to explain the qualitative change, Burley makes an analogy to local motion, and argues:

> In local motion, the moved, in any instant of the time measuring the motion, has first one place and then another totally new place . . . Hence, in the motion of alteration, in any instant of the time measuring the alteration, the altered has first one and then another quality, totally and numerically new.[59]

It seems that the persisting criticism of Burley's theory as presented in *Tractatus secundus* forced him to revise the issue of qualitative change more than several times. Later, in his works on the philosophy of nature, he gradually gave up some parts of his solution, and finally in his Bolognese quodlibet accepted a Scotist view on the issue.[60]

## *Conclusions*

Walter Burley's views concerning matter and form do not diverge, for the most part, from the shared opinion of his contemporaries. In amalgamating certain ideas of Averroes, Aquinas, Scotus, and others into his own opinion, he may be seen as one of the early representatives of the *via*

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[58] See Burley, *Tractatus secundus*, MS Florence, Bibl. Marucelliana, C 163, fol. 54rb: "Positis et reprobatis opinionibus famosis huius temporis restat nunc, cum Dei adiutorio, dicere quod occurrit. Et pono tres conclusiones. Prima est quod in omni motu ad formam acquiritur aliquid novum, quod est forma vel pars forme. Secunda est quod per omnem motum corrumpitur tota forma precedens a qua est per se motus et acquiritur una forma totaliter nova cuius nihil prefuit. Tertia est quod nulla forma intenditur nec remittitur, sed subiectum forme intenditur et remittitur secundum formam, ita quod forma est illud secundum quod subiectum intenditur vel remittitur."

[59] Ibid., fol. 56ra: "Secundo probo eandem consequentiam sic: non maiorem unitatem forme secundum quam est motus requirit[ur] motus alterationis quam motus localis unitatem ubi secundum quod est motus localis; sed in motu locali mobile in quolibet instanti temporis mensurantis motum habet aliud ubi et aliud totaliter novum, loquendo de ubi proprio quod causatur a circumscriptione loci proprii; ergo in motu alterationis alterabile in quolibet instanti temporis mensurantis alterationem habet aliam et aliam qualitatem numero totaliter novam." English translation by H. Shapiro.

[60] See Sylla, "Walter Burley's *Physics* Commentaries," 184.

*communis*, so characteristic for thinkers of the next century. Such an attitude may have won him the nickname *Doctor planus et perspicuus*. Seen against the background of common opinions his original contributions to the development of medieval natural philosophy do not look particularly imposing, yet they provide some interesting insights into those problems which he found especially attractive, like the intension and remission of forms.

CHAPTER NINE

# MOTION AND TIME

Cecilia Trifogli

## *Introduction*

Motion and time are not only central notions of Aristotle's natural philosophy but also major topics of debate for medieval commentators on Aristotle. The most fundamental questions raised in the medieval debate are ontological, questions asking what kinds of entities motion and time exactly are. Although these questions often arise from very specific aspects of Aristotle's theory, they in fact address issues relevant to the opposition between realists and nominalists/conceptualists. Just as there is a well-known dispute between realists and nominalists on the nature of universals, so there is a much less investigated dispute between realists and nominalists on the nature of motion and time. And just as Burley is a strong realist about universals, so he is a strong realist about motion and time. In particular, in the case of motion the reductionist position that he explicitly attacks is that of Ockham. This chapter is devoted to the presentation of Burley's realism about motion and time as it appears in his final commentary on Aristotle's *Physics* (hereafter: *Physics*-Commentary), which he began to write in 1324. It is this work which is Burley's most significant contribution to natural philosophy and the one that circulated most widely.[1]

## 1. *Motion*

The section of the *Physics*-Commentary devoted to Aristotle's treatise on motion (*Physics* 3.1–3) contains two lengthy digressions on the question of the ontological status of motion: one devoted to Averroes' view[2] and

[1] Walter Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis Expositio et Quaestiones* (Venice, 1501; repr. Hildesheim, 1972). On the different *Physics*-Commentaries by Burley see Rega Wood, "Walter Burley's *Physics* Commentaries," *Franciscan Studies* 44 (1984), 275–327.

[2] Burley, *In Physicam* 3, fols. 61vb–62ra.

the other to Ockham's view.[3] These two digressions are the main source to reconstruct Burley's own view.[4] Historically, Averroes and Ockham are two very different protagonists of the medieval debate. Averroes is not only an old one but also the origin of the debate among Latin commentators, since it is Averroes who first attracted their attention to the question of the ontological status of motion. Ockham is a new protagonist at Burley's time: the arguments of Ockham that Burley reports are those presented by Ockham in his *Physics*-Commentary written just before Burley's commentary. Furthermore, while Averroes and Ockham both hold anti-realist positions on motion, Burley's attitudes to them are strikingly different. Burley treats Averroes—the *Commentator*—as an *auctoritas*, whose views, like those of Aristotle himself, must be defended, but he treats Ockham as a beginner in philosophy, whose views are in principle not reliable. Thus, Burley tries to show that Averroes' view can be saved and interpreted in such a way that it is compatible with his own realist assumptions, but he displays a radical opposition to Ockham's view and rejects it completely without even trying to understand it adequately. In what follows I will first give a short presentation of Burley's interpretation of Averroes' view and then deal extensively with his reaction to Ockham's view.[5]

### 1.1. *Burley's Interpretation of Averroes' View*

Averroes does not expressly raise the question of the ontological status of motion, but medieval Latin commentators think that he does provide an answer to it in his attempt to solve an exegetical problem about the classification of motion within Aristotle's categories.[6] In *Physics* 3, Aristotle distinguishes four species of motion or change: change with respect to substance (generation and corruption), change with respect to quality (qualitative change, i.e., alteration), change with respect to quantity (quantitative change, i.e., increase and decrease), and change with respect

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[3] Ibid., fols. 64rb–65vb.

[4] On Burley's view see also Anneliese Maier, *Zwischen Philosophie und Mechanik* (Rome, 1958), 46–53, 106–117.

[5] For a more detailed presentation of Burley's interpretation of Averroes' view see Cecilia Trifogli, "The Reception of Averroes' View on Motion in the Latin West: the Case of Walter Burley", forthcoming in the Proceedings of the Workshop "Averroes' Natural Philosophy and Its European Reception", Nijmegen, June 2011.

[6] On Averroes' view and its reception in the medieval debate see Maier, *Zwischen Philosophie und Mechanik*, 59–143; Cecilia Trifogli, *Oxford Physics in the Thirteenth Century* (*ca. 1250–1270*). *Motion, Infinity, Place and Time* (Leiden, 2000), 37–86.

to place (locomotion).[7] In Averroes' interpretation this distinction implies that motion itself exists in the four categories of substance, quality, quantity, and "where" (*ubi*), in the sense that a substantial change is an item of the category of substance, a qualitative change is an item of the category of quality, a quantitative change is an item of the category of quantity, and a locomotion is an item of the category of "where". In the *Categories*, however, Aristotle gives being heated and being cooled—which are motions and in particular qualitative changes—as examples of items in the category of passion, thus suggesting that every kind of motion belongs the category of passion.[8] In order to reconcile Aristotle's conflicting views Averroes introduces a distinction between two ways of regarding motion. It is this distinction that becomes the *locus classicus* for the medieval Latin debate on the ontological status of motion. Motion—Averroes says-can be regarded either (i) as differing only in degree (*secundum magis et minus*) from the form that is its *terminus ad quem* or (ii) as a way towards a form (*via ad formam*). Motion regarded as differing only in degree from its final form is nothing other than the form acquired by the mobile body through a change when this form is still in an incomplete state, namely, in the state of being generated and not in the actual state in which it exists as *terminus ad quem*. For example, a body's becoming hot is nothing other than heat in an incomplete state. Burley's standard expression for motion regarded in this first way is "diminished form" (*forma diminuta*). Motion regarded as a diminished form belongs to the four categories of substance, quality, quantity, and "where". Motion regarded as a way towards a form, however, is really distinct from its final form and it is an entity in its own right. Thus, becoming hot as a way towards heat is a thing in itself distinct from heat. Motion regarded as a way towards a form belongs to the category of passion. According to Averroes, however, these two ways of "regarding" a motion do not have the same value: the first way of regarding motion, namely, as a diminished form, is truer, whereas the second way, namely, as a way towards a form, is merely "more famous".[9]

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[7] Aristotle, *Physics*, ed. W.D. Ross (Oxford, 1936), 3.1, 200b32–34. On Aristotle's theory of motion and of time, see especially the commentary by Edward Hussey in: *Aristotle Physics.* Books III and IV. Translated with Introduction and Notes by Edward Hussey (Oxford, 1983).

[8] Aristotle, *Categoriae*, ed. L. Minio-Paluello (Oxford, 1949), 9, 11b1–8.

[9] Averroes Cordubensis, *Aristotelis de Physico Auditu* (*Aristotelis Opera cum Averrois Commentariis* 8) (Venice, 1562; repr. Frankfurt, 1962) (hereafter: *In Physicam*), 3.4, fol. 87raC–rbE: "Et quaeritur de hoc quod dicit hic quod motus non invenitur in uno praedicamento, et dictum est in libro *de praedicamentis* ipsum esse in praedicamento

For most medieval Latin commentators Averroes' distinction, which he presents as a distinction between two ways of regarding motion, in fact reflects two contrasting ontologies of motion: one is reductionist and the other is realist. Consider the case of a body's becoming hot, a qualitative change. If becoming hot is "regarded" as the diminished form of heat, then becoming hot is not a thing distinct from the heat finally acquired by the body—becoming hot is heat itself in some way (*ire ad calorem est calor quoquomodo*), as Averroes puts it[10]—it is just the same as heat but in an incomplete state. Accordingly, the view that motion is a diminished form is a reductionist view on the ontological status of motion, in particular a view that reduces motion to a more basic thing involved in a body's changing, namely, the final form towards which that body is changing. On the contrary, if becoming hot is regarded as a way towards heat, then becoming hot is a thing distinct from heat: a thing through which the body acquires heat, a process leading to heat. Thus, in this case, it is necessary to posit motion as a thing in itself, distinct from its final form and also from the mobile body and all the forms that the mobile body takes on during its motion. In the standard medieval Latin interpretation of Averroes, in addition to presenting two contrasting opinions on the ontological status of motion, Averroes clearly sides with the reductionist one, since he regards it as truer, and rejects the realist one as being merely more famous, that is, reflecting a common opinion about motion, which is not, however, Aristotle's own view nor the appropriate one from the philosophical point of view.

Burley is a realist about motion but at the same time he wants to defend Averroes. And he does this by proposing an interpretation of Averroes' distinction that is not the standard one. The tacit assumption behind the standard interpretation is that there are only two possible ways of

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passionis. Et secundum hoc aut non debemus computare praedicamentum passionis aut non debemus dicere ipsum inveniri pluribus uno praedicamento. Ad hoc autem dicamus quoniam motus secundum quod non differt a perfectione ad quam vadit nisi secundum magis et minus necesse est ut sit de genere illius perfectionis. Motus enim nihil aliud est quam generatio partis post aliam illius perfectionis ad quam intendit motus donec perficiatur et fit in actu. Unde necesse est ut motus qui est in substantia inveniatur in genere substantiae, et motus qui est in quantitate in genere quantitatis, et similiter qui est in ubi et qualitate. Secundum autem quod est via ad perfectionem quae est alia ab ipsa perfectione necesse est ut sit genus per se. Via enim ad rem est aliud ab ipsa re. Et secundum hoc fuit positum praedicamentum per se. Et iste modus est famosior, ille autem est verior, et ideo Aristoteles induxit illum modum famosum in *Praedicamentis* et istum modum verum in hoc libro". For Burley's report of this passage, see Burley, *In Physicam* 3, fol. 61vb.

[10] Averroes, *In Physicam* 5.9, fol. 215raA.

understanding Averroes' distinction: either as a distinction between two properties of one and the same thing or as a distinction between two conflicting opinions about the nature of one and the same thing, namely, motion. The first alternative, however, can be ruled out immediately because the two properties in Averroes' distinction—being essentially the same as the final form and being a way towards this form really distinct from it—are incompatible and so cannot belong to one and the same thing. Therefore, we are left with the second alternative: Averroes is distinguishing between two conflicting opinions about motion. According to Burley, however, the two alternative ways of understanding Averroes' distinction are not exhaustive. There is a third one: Averroes' distinction is a distinction between two ways of taking the term "motion" (*motus accipitur dupliciter*). In one way the term "motion" is taken to stand for a diminished form and in another way it is taken to stand for a way towards a form. In short, the term "motion" is ambiguous and Averroes is distinguishing two different significates of it.[11]

The clear advantage of Burley's alternative interpretation is that it makes Averroes' distinction compatible with a realist view about motion. According to his interpretation, there is a thing distinct from the mobile substance and the formal determinations with respect to which this substance changes, and such a thing is one of the significates of the term "motion". In presenting Averroes' view Burley does not feel the need to defend the assumption of the existence of such a thing, partly because he thinks that this is also Averroes' assumption (but, as we shall see in the next section, he has to defend it against Ockham's explicit attack). What is obviously matter of concern for him is Averroes' comparative remark that the way of considering motion as a diminished form is truer than the way of considering motion as a way towards a form, which is merely more famous. Burley as a realist cannot accept Averroes' claim without qualification. And he does qualify it by introducing the following distinction:

> One way of taking motion being truer than the other can be understood in two ways, namely, with respect to the reality of the thing or with respect to the signification of the name. And then I say that the way of taking motion as a diminished form is truer with respect to the being of the thing, because motion taken as a diminished form is a more perfect kind of being than motion that belongs to the category of passion, since the former belongs to a more perfect category. Yet the way of taking motion as a successive

[11] Burley, *In Physicam* 3, fol. 61vb.

> transmutation is truer with respect to the signification of the name, because the name "motion" primarily signifies a successive transmutation rather than a diminished form.[12]

Burley's point is that if one compares the two things signified by the term "motion", the diminished form has more ontological value than the way to the form because of a hierarchy among the categories according to which substance, quality, quantity, and "where" have some kind of ontological priority over passion (a priority taken for granted by Burley here). The primary signification of the term "motion", however, is the realist one—a way towards the form or a successive transmutation.

### 1.2. *Burley's Rejection of Ockham's View*

While for Burley the term "motion" primarily signifies a way towards a form conceived as a thing really distinct from the mobile body and all the formal determinations taken on by it during its change, Ockham denies altogether that the term "motion"—either primarily or secondarily—signifies such a thing. Ockham makes this point clear in the following passage where he considers the interpretation of Averroes' distinction as a distinction between two ways of taking the term "motion" offered by Burley and rejects it in favour of the traditional interpretation as a distinction between a true opinion and a false opinion about motion:

> When the Commentator makes distinctions about motion in that passage, he does not mean that motion could be truly taken in two ways, so far as the truth of the matter is concerned, so that evidently one way it is the terminus to which and another way it is the way that differs from the terminus of motion and from the mobile object. *For no motion is any such distinct thing*. Rather he intends to say that there are two opinions about motion, of which the one, viz., the famous one, is false, and the other true.[13]

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[12] Burley, *In Physicam* 3, fol. 62va: "Unum modum accipiendi motum esse veriorem alio potest intelligi dupliciter, scilicet vel quantum ad entitatem rei vel quantum ad significationem nominis. Et tunc dico quod modus accipiendi motum pro forma diminuta est verior quantum ad entitatem rei, quoniam motus acceptus pro forma diminuta est perfectius ens, cum sit perfectioris generis quam motus de genere passionis, sed modus accipiendi motum pro transmutatione successiva est verior quantum ad significationem nominis, quia hoc nomen 'motus' per prius significat transmutationem successivam quam formam diminutam".

[13] William of Ockham, *Expositio in libros Physicorum Aristotelis* (hereafter: *In Physicam*) (*Opera Philosophica* 4) 3.2, ed. V. Richter and G. Leibold (St. Bonaventure, 1985), 436: "Commentator ibi distinguens de motu non intendit quod veraciter 'motus' possit duobus modis accipi, videlicet quod realiter motus, uno modo accepto motu, sit terminus ad quem, et alio modo sit via differens a termino et a mobili, quia nullus motus est talis res

According to Ockham, the reason why "motion" cannot signify such distinct thing is that there is not such distinct thing, as he argues at length.

Ockham attacks this realist conception of motion under a more general formulation, a formulation in terms of the distinction between permanent and successive things.[14] In most general terms, permanent and successive things correspond to objects and processes respectively.[15] The *locus classicus* for this distinction is a passage of *Physics* 3.6 where Aristotle contrasts the mode of being of a house and a man—permanent things in the medieval classification—with that of a day and an athletic context—successive things.[16] In the case of things having parts, medieval philosophers define the difference between permanent and successive things in terms of a difference in the temporal properties of their respective parts. Any part of a permanent thing can exist in an instant, i.e., in a durationless temporal point, but no part of a successive thing can exist in an instant. Furthermore, all the parts of a permanent thing can exist simultaneously (*simul*), i.e., at the same time; the parts of a successive thing, on the contrary, cannot exist simultaneously, but only one after another. Consider, for example, the case of a body that becomes hot and compare this body and the form of heat on one hand, and the becoming hot of this body on the other. The body has extension and physical parts, and these parts are such that they can all exist at the same time. Similarly, the heat existing in an extended body has parts and these parts correspond to the parts of the body: a part of heat is that which inheres in a part of the hot body. Furthermore, the parts of heat so defined can all exist at the same time: at the end of its becoming hot, when the body is hot throughout its extension, all the parts of heat exist simultaneously. The body that becomes hot and the heat acquired by the body then are permanent things. The body's becoming hot also has parts (that is, phases), but these parts are such that they cannot exist simultaneously but only one after another: when the body is changing from heat of degree one to heat of degree two, it is not also at the same time changing from heat of degree two to heat of degree three. The becoming hot of a body is a successive thing. More generally, since according to Aristotle, every motion is a continuous

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alia, sed intendit ibi duas opiniones de motu, quarum una, scilicet famosa, est falsa et alia opinio est vera."

[14] On Ockham's view on motion see Marilyn McCord Adams, *William Ockham*, 2 vols. (Notre Dame, 1987), 2: 800–827.

[15] On the medieval discussion about successive things, see Robert Pasnau, *Metaphysical Themes 1274–1671* (Oxford, 2011), 374–398.

[16] Aristotle, *Physics* 3.6, 206a29–33.

process and thus involves a succession of distinct phases, every motion is a successive thing.

Ockham rejects a strong realist reading of the distinction between permanent and successive things. His general claim is that there are no successive things as things distinct from permanent things, and in the case of motion his claim is that "no motion is a thing distinct as a whole from permanent things".[17] With this claim he does not mean to deny the obvious fact that in the change of a body there is a succession of phases. What he wants to deny is that in order to account for this succession it is legitimate to posit motion as a thing essentially successive and so distinct from permanent things. Now, to posit that there is a way towards a form, understood as a thing belonging to the category of passion that the term "motion" primarily signifies, as Burley posits, would be in Ockham's view to posit such thing: a thing in its nature successive—*transmutatio successiva*—distinct from all the other permanent things involved in a change, that is, the mobile body, the formal determinations it takes on during its change and the efficient cause of its change.

Referring to Ockham as *quidam de modernis philosophantibus*,[18] Burley reports and replies to a good number of arguments presented by him in his *Physics*-commentary against the view that motion is a successive thing distinct from permanent things.[19] Two of them are particularly relevant in the dispute between the two philosophers: (1) one that challenges the intelligibility itself of the notion of a successive thing; (2) another that applies the "razor-principle": it is superfluous to posit motion as a successive thing distinct from permanent things because "everything" can be saved without such a thing.

(1) Motion as a successive thing is defined as a whole composed of parts but such that its parts do not exist simultaneously. According to Ockham, this definition cannot be the definition of a "genuine" thing. His argument is the following:

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[17] Ockham, *In Physicam* 3.2, 430: "nullus motus est aliqua res secundum se totam distincta a rebus permanentibus".

[18] Burley, *In Physicam* 3, fol. 64rb: "Sed circa naturam motus, id est cuius<modi> ens sit motus, contingit dubitare quoniam quidam de modernis philosophantibus dicunt quod nec motus nec mutatio est res secundum se totam distincta a rebus permanentibus". *Mutatio* is an instantaneous change. I will not consider Ockham's arguments about *mutatio* and Burley's reply to them.

[19] See Ockham, *In Physicam* 3.2, 430–449; Burley, *In Physicam* 3, fols. 64rb–65vb.

(i) If the parts of motion cannot exist simultaneously, then some of them are past and others are future;
(ii) but neither the past nor the future exists;
(iii) therefore, the parts of motion do not exist;
(iv) therefore, motion itself is not a real being because a real being cannot be composed of non-existing parts.[20]

This argument is a famous one, since Aristotle himself formulates it against the existence of time in *Physics* 4.10. Time—Aristotle argues—is composed of the past and of the future; but neither the past nor the future exist; therefore, time itself, being composed of non-beings, does not exist. The inference in (i) apparently neglects the alternative that some parts of motion are present. However, in the Aristotelian context it does not. According to Aristotle, the present is an instant, an indivisible element of time, and no part of motion or of time, having temporal extension, can exist in the present. Every part of motion or of time is itself divided into past parts or future parts or both past and future parts.[21]

Medieval commentators realize that Aristotle's argument applies not only to time but also to motion and point out that it applies to both exactly because both time and motion are successive things and not permanent things. It is an argument against the existence of successive things, which shows that the notion of a successive thing is not intelligible: if something is a thing, then it cannot be successive because then a being would be composed of non-beings.

While Ockham regards Aristotle's argument as conclusive, many other medieval commentators, however, do not think it is.[22] After all, it seems that the distinction between permanent and successive things is found in Aristotle's texts themselves. Furthermore, in the case of time, after presenting this argument against its existence, Aristotle seems to neglect it and goes on investigating the nature of time—what time is—an investigation that presupposes a positive answer to the question of whether time exists. The more common view among medieval commentators rather is that Aristotle's argument is not conclusive against the existence of motion and time because it is question-begging. It is based on a criterion of existence that is valid only for permanent things but is incompatible with

[20] Ockham, *In Physicam* 3.2, 431; Burley, *In Physicam* 3, fol. 64va.
[21] Aristotle, *Physics* 4.10, 217b32–218a8.
[22] On the medieval debate about Aristotle's argument see Anneliese Maier, *Metaphysische Hintergründe der Spätscholastischen Naturphilosophie* (Rome, 1955), 47–64.

the nature of successive things. The criterion of existence assumed in the argument is that of the simultaneous existence of the parts: for a whole composed of parts to exist its parts must exist simultaneously and in particular in the present. By definition, however, successive things are those the parts of which cannot exist simultaneously. Burley makes this point in his short reply to Ockham's version of the argument:

> And when it is said that the parts of motion do not exist, I concede this. Yet motion exists. Accordingly, this is the difference between a permanent thing and a successive thing, namely, that a permanent thing exists simultaneously as a whole or can exist simultaneously as a whole, whereas it is repugnant to a successive thing that it exists simultaneously as a whole. And then I concede that a successive thing is composed of non-beings, and it is certain that a part of this day is past and another is future, and yet this day exists and the same is true of this year and of the parts of this year.[23]

Burley, however, is not satisfied with merely pointing out that Aristotle's and Ockham's argument begs the question against the existence of successive things. Like most medieval commentators, he does realize that the argument raises the issue of defining a criterion of existence specific for successive things, a criterion that gives an answer to the question "In virtue of what can successive things be legitimately said to be existing things, despite the fact that none of their parts exists in the present?" Burley addresses this issue in the section of his *Physics*-commentary devoted to Aristotle's treatise on time (*Physics* 4.10–14). In addition to giving some specific arguments to show that time exists, Burley also determines the necessary and sufficient condition for the existence of time and every other successive thing. His view is that "in order for something successive to have being it is sufficient and necessary that an indivisible that joins its parts one to another has being".[24]

In proposing this criterion Burley relies on the property of the relevant successive things—motion and time- of being a continuum in Aristotle's sense, that is, something divisible into parts such that any two consecutive parts join at one common boundary, which is indivisible. A geometrical

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[23] Burley, *In Physicam* 3, fol. 65rb: "Et cum dicitur quod partes motus non sunt, concedo. Et tamen est motus. Unde haec est differentia inter rem permanentem et rem successivam quia res permanens est tota simul vel potest esse tota simul, sed repugnat successivo quod sit totum simul. Et sic concedo quod successivum componitur ex non entibus, et certum est quod aliqua pars huius diei est praeterita et aliqua futura, et tamen ista dies est et ita est de isto anno et de partibus huius anni".

[24] Burley, *In Physicam* 4, fol. 124rb: "Ad hoc quod aliquod successivum habeat esse sufficit et requiritur quod aliquod indivisibile copulans eius partes ad invicem habeat esse".

line is the paradigmatic example of a continuum. Given any (internal) point *p* in a line, *p* defines two consecutive parts of the line: that on the left of *p* and that on the right of *p*. According to Aristotle, the continuity of the line consists in the property of these two parts of having the point *p* as a common boundary: *p* is both the final point of the part of the line on the left of *p* and the initial point of the part of the line on the right of *p*. Similarly, in motion and time, being continua, there are indivisible elements at which their consecutive parts join. These are called *mutata esse* and instants respectively. With his criterion of existence for successive things, Burley takes the view that the existence of one of these continuative indivisibles is necessary and sufficient for the existence of the successive thing containing that indivisible as continuative element: the existence of a continuative *mutatum esse* is necessary and sufficient for the existence of a motion containing it, and that of a continuative instant for the existence of a period of time containing it. The question then is what the relevant sense of existence for such an indivisible in motion and time is. Although Burley is not always explicit on this point, it is clear that the relevant sense for him is that of being present. Accordingly, for the existence of a motion it is necessary and sufficient that it contains the present *mutatum esse* as continuative element, and for the existence of a period of time it is necessary and sufficient that it contains the present instant as continuative element. For example, today is an existing period of time because it contains the present instant as continuative element. Similarly, a motion lasting for the whole present hour is an existing motion because it contains the present *mutatum esse*—the instantaneous phase of this motion that occurs in the present instant—as continuative element.

The idea that the existence of the present indivisibles in motion and time guarantees the existence of motion and time as divisible successive things is not original of Burley. On the contrary, it reflects one of the traditional solutions to Aristotle's argument against the existence of time formulated by medieval commentators.[25] What is more distinctive of Burley is his concern in showing the necessity of the requirement that the present indivisible must also be a continuative element. He gives the following argument for this point. Suppose that $t_1$ and $t_2$ are two consecutive periods of time and that instant *a* is their common boundary, so that *a* is the final instant of $t_1$ and the initial instant of $t_2$. In this situation *a* is

[25] For other exponents of this solution see Maier, *Metaphysische Hintergründe der Spätscholastischen Naturphilosophie*, 52–57.

a continuative instant of the whole period of time composed of $t_1$ and $t_2$, but it is not a continuative element of $t_1$ nor of $t_2$. Now if the existence of instant $a$ were sufficient for the existence of $t_1$ and $t_2$, then at instant $a$ it would be true to say that both $t_1$ and $t_2$ exist and so that $t_1$ and $t_2$ exist simultaneously. This consequence cannot be accepted. Take, for example, $t_1$ to be the past and $t_2$ to be the future or $t_1$ to be the day and $t_2$ to be the night following it. The consequence would then be that the past and the future exist simultaneously and that the day and the night exist simultaneously.[26]

Burley's argument also makes clear that the past and the future (either of time or of a motion) do not exist according to his criterion of existence for successive things. Even when they contain the present indivisible, they do not contain it as continuative element. He denies, however, that a successive thing necessarily contains only past and future parts. To make this point, he extends the use of the term "present" in a non-Aristotelian way to refer also to a part of a successive thing containing the present indivisible as continuative element. In this terminology, to the objection that successive things do not exist because none of their parts exist, relying on his criterion for the existence of successive things Burley replies that successive things have plenty of existing parts, namely, all their present parts. Or in a more suggestive formulation, the point of Burley's reply is that while it is true that only the present exists, the present, however, is not only an indivisible but also an extended part of a successive thing.[27]

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[26] Burley, *In Physicam* 4, fol. 124rb: "…Nec sufficit quod aliquod indivisibile illius habeat esse, quia, si sic, cum idem indivisibile, scilicet praesens instans, copulat praeteritum et futurum ad invicem, ita quod instans est finis praeteriti et initium futuri, et sic si ad hoc quod successivum habeat esse sufficeret quod aliquod indivisibile illius haberet esse, sequitur quod praeteritum et futurum simul essent, quia, cum est verum dicere quod aliquod indivisibile illius temporis praeteriti est et quod aliquod indivisibile temporis futuri est, sequitur quod nunc esset verum dicere quod tempus futurum esset et quod tam tempus praeteritum quam tempus futurum esset praesens. Similiter idem instans est principium noctis et finis diei; ergo si ad esse successivi sufficeret esse alicuius indivisibilis sequitur quod dies et nox simul essent".

[27] Burley, *In Physicam* 4, fol. 124va: "Sed si dicatur 'illud non est cuius nulla pars est; sed tempus non habet alias partes nisi praeteritum et futurum et neutrum horum est; ergo', dicendum concedendo quod illud non est cuius nulla pars est. Et cum dicitur quod nulla pars temporis est, dico quod cuiuslibet temporis praesentis sunt infinitae partes habentes unam partem praeteritam et aliam futuram. Verbi gratia, annus praesens habet infinitas partes quarum quaelibet habet partem praeteritam et partem futuram, ut scilicet mensem praesentem, diem, septimanam et horam et sic in infinitum… Et quando dicitur quod tempus praesens non habet alias partes nisi praeteritum et futurum, dico quod illud est falsum. Immo cuiuslibet temporis praesentis sunt infinitae partes praesentes". On Burley's solution to Aristotle's argument against the existence of time and its similarity with that

Burley's solution to the problem of the existence of successive things would be rejected by Ockham, since it violates a further assumption of Ockham's reductive ontology, that is, that there are no indivisible elements in continuous quantities. In particular, there are no points, lines, surfaces, but only three-dimensional parts in a body. Similarly, there are no instants in time nor *mutata esse* in a motion.[28]

(2) According to Ockham, the attempts of the realists to make the notion of successive thing intelligible are not only unsuccessful but also useless, since in his view there is no need to posit the existence of successive things, as he argues in the case of motion:

> Therefore, it must be said that motion is not such thing distinct as a whole from every permanent things. The reason for this is that (i) it is futile to do with more things what can be done with fewer; (ii) but without every such distinct thing we can save motion and all the things said about motion; (iii) therefore, it is futile to posit such distinct thing.[29]

The major premise (i) of the argument is Ockham's famous razor-principle. The minor premise (ii) claims that the existence of motion as successive thing distinct from all permanent things would violate this principle. In replying to Ockham's argument, Burley accepts the razor-principle but he strongly denies that the principle can be applied to motion. Thus, the dispute between the two philosophers is about whether or not it is possible to account for motion without positing motion as a successive thing distinct from permanent things.

Ockham argues that this is possible by induction on the different species of motion. His discussion of the case of local motion is the most illuminating:

> This is evident in the case of local motion. For by positing that a body is first in one place and then in another place and by proceeding in this way without rest and without any intermediate thing or thing distinct from the

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of Thomas Wylton, who was very likely his teacher, see Cecilia Trifogli, "The Reality of Time in the Commentary Tradition on the *Physics*: the Case of Wylton and Burley," in *Il commento filosofico nell'Occidente Latino* (*secoli XIII–XV*), ed. Gianfranco Fioravanti et al. (Turnhout, 2002), 233–251.

[28] On Ockham's rejection of indivisibles, see McCord Adams, *William Ockham*, 1: 201–213.

[29] Ockham, *In Physicam* 3.2, 432: "Ideo dicendum est quod motus non est talis res distincta secundum se totam ab omni re permanente. Quia frustra fit per plura quod potest fieri per pauciora, sed sine omni tali alia re possumus salvare motum et omnia quae dicuntur de motu; ergo talis alia res frustra ponitur". See also Burley, *In Physicam* 3, fol. 64va.

> body itself or from the agent itself that moves, we truly have local motion; therefore, it is futile to posit such other thing.[30]

In this passage Ockham assumes that the local motion of a body consists in this body's occupying always different places. Thus, what must be accounted for in the case of locomotion is that a body is first in a place *a* and then in a place *b*. To account for this one needs—Ockham claims—only the body and places *a* and *b*; but these are all permanent things. Ockham considers an objection to the claim that body and places are sufficient for locomotion. If they were sufficient, then whenever there are a body and distinct places, there would be locomotion, and this is evidently false. A body can well be at rest in a place without occupying distinct places. In replying to this objection, Ockham concedes that body and places are not sufficient for locomotion in the sense that the following consequence is not formally valid "a body and places exist, therefore a locomotion of this body exists". Since they are not sufficient, something must be added to them to account for the locomotion of a body. And this is the following condition that a body and places must satisfy: the body is *first* in place *a* and *then* in place *b*, so that the body is *not simultaneously* in place *a* and in place *b*. Similarly, in the case of the other two species of motion—motion with respect to quality and motion with respect to quantity—the relevant condition is that the forms with respect to which the body changes (i.e., qualities and quantities respectively) do not exist simultaneously in the body, but one after another. Accordingly, the relevant condition for motion is the non-simultaneity condition. But this condition—Ockham insists—can be satisfied without positing a thing distinct from permanent things because: "non-simultaneity is not a thing distinct from the things that can exist simultaneously, but signifies that these things are not simultaneous".[31] That is, permanent things like places and forms are not totally incompatible with non-simultaneity because they are such that they can be acquired non-simultaneously by a body. From this Ockham infers that the permanent things involved in a motion are enough to explain the non-simultaneity that is distinctive of a motion.

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[30] Ockham, *In Physicam* 3.2, 432: "de moto (*read*: motu) enim locali patet. Ponendo enim quod corpus sit primo in uno loco et postea in alio loco et sic procedendo sine omni quiete et sine omni re media vel alia ab ipso corpore vel ipso agente quod movet, vere habemus motum localem; ergo frustra ponitur talis alia res". See also Burley, *In Physicam* 3, fol. 64va.

[31] Ockham, *In Physicam* 3.2, 434: "non-simultas non est aliqua alia res a rebus quae possunt esse simul, sed significat quod res non sunt simul".

Because non-simultaneity is grammatically a negation, Ockham formulates his position also in terms of affirmations and negations:

> Motion is composed of affirmations and negations, that is, in order for a motion to exist it is enough that the parts <of permanent things> and permanent things exist but not simultaneously so that for the truth of the proposition "a motion exists" it is enough that some affirmative and some negative propositions are true, and neither the positive propositions nor the negative ones require or denote that a thing distinct from permanent things exists.[32]

The affirmative propositions in which the proposition "a motion exists" can be expanded are those denoting the existence of the relevant permanent things while the negative propositions are those expressing the negative condition that these things are not simultaneous. With this distinction, Ockham apparently hopes to suggest a convincing point in favour of his reductionist position, namely, that for the truth of a negation no "positive" thing is required. Thus, for the truth of a negative proposition expressing that some permanent things are not simultaneous no position of a thing (distinct from those permanent things) is required. Ockham's point, however, and in particular his move of treating non-simultaneity as a negation would hardly have convinced a realist. For "non-simultaneity" is equivalent to "succession", and "succession" is not only grammatically an affirmative term but a realist would insist that it also denotes something positive. Burley in particular does maintain that succession is something positive, as will appear most clearly in the section on time.[33] And far from being in any way impressed by Ockham's point that no additional thing is required to account for non-simultaneity, Burley does not even seem to understand this point, as is clear from his refutation of Ockham's claim that motion is composed of affirmations and negations. Burley argues that this claim implies the denial of the existence of motion altogether:

> Therefore, I first prove that motion is not a composite of affirmations and negations, as these people say. And I first prove this as follows: that position is false which destroys that motion exists; but this position is of this kind; therefore and so on. The major premise is evident because that motion exists

[32] Ibid., 434–435: "Motus componitur ex negationibus et affirmationibus, hoc est ad hoc quod motus sit, sufficit quod partes et res permanentes sint sed non simul ita quod ad veritatem istius 'motus est' sufficiunt quaedam affirmativae et quaedam negativae et quod nec per affirmativas nec per negativas ponitur vel denotatur aliqua alia res esse a rebus permanentibus". See also Burley, *In Physicam* 3, fol. 64vb.

[33] See below, 286–292.

> must be assumed by the natural philosopher as a principle of cognition, as is evident from *Physics* 1, and therefore to deny that motion exists is to destroy natural science, and the natural philosopher should not discuss with someone denying that motion exists. The minor premise is evident because no being is composed of affirmations and negations, because according to the people who make this claim non-being is not part of a being; but negation is a non-being; therefore, a being is not composed of affirmations and negations; therefore, if motion is composed of affirmations and negations, it follows that motion would be absolutely a non-being.[34]

Burley here ignores Ockham's explanation of the concise claim that motion is composed of affirmations and negations. While Ockham means that the proposition "motion exists" is equivalent to a combination of some affirmative and some negative propositions, Burley interprets this claim in an ontological sense as saying that motion is a thing composed of beings, i.e., affirmations, and not-beings, i.e., negations. In particular, while Ockham means that for the truth of the negative proposition "permanent things do not exist simultaneously" no thing distinct from permanent things is required, Burley takes Ockham to mean that a no-thing, that is, a non-being, is required.

There are, however, other parts of Burley's discussion that show that Burley does understand that the nature of Ockham's reductionism consists in reducing motion to permanent things and not to non-beings, and tries to show why this is not acceptable. For example, in replying to the Razor-argument quoted above[35] Burley maintains:

> To the third argument, when it is said that it is futile to do with more things what can and so on, I concede this. And when it is said that motion and the things said about motion are equally well saved by positing that motion is not a thing distinct and so on, I reply by denying this, because unless motion is a thing distinct from permanent things neither motion nor the things said of motion are saved. And when it is argued as follows: by positing that a body is first in one place and then in another and so on, I say that, if that

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[34] Burley, *In Physicam* 3, fol. 65ra: "Primo igitur probo quod motus non est quid compositum ex affirmationibus et negationibus, ut isti dicunt. Et hoc probo primo sic: illa positio est falsa quae destruit motum esse; sed <haec> positio est huiusmodi; ergo etc. Maior patet quia motum esse est supponendum a naturali tamquam principium cognitionis, ut patet 1 huius, et ideo negare motum esse est destruere scientiam naturalem nec cum negante motum esse habet philosophus naturalis loqui. Minor patet quia nullum ens est compositum ex affirmationibus et negationibus, quoniam secundum sic dicentes non ens non est pars alicuius entis; sed negatio est non ens; ergo ex affirmatione et negatione non componitur aliquod ens; igitur, si motus sit compositus ex affirmationibus et negationibus, sequitur quod motus esset omnino non ens".

[35] See the two passages quoted above on p. 279.

> argument were valid, it would follow that motion can exist without a mover, because then by positing only that a body is now in a place and then in another, all the things other than the mobile body and place being removed, we truly have locomotion. Therefore, if the argument were conclusive, it would be futile to posit a mover. And because it is impossible that a motion exists without a mover, therefore I say that that argument is not valid.
>
> And then to the form of the argument, when it is said that, if the same body is first in one place and then in another without any other thing, we truly have motion, I say that that claim includes a contradiction, namely, that the same body is now in one place and then in another without any other thing. For just as it includes a contradiction that the same body is now in one place and then in another without a mover transferring that body from a place to another, so it includes a contradiction that the same body is now in one place and then in another *without motion by which formally it is transferred from a place to another*.[36]

In this reply Burley concedes to Ockham that a body's moving locally can be defined as that body's being first in one place and then in another place. He rejects, however, Ockham's inference that, if this definition is correct, then only the things explicitly involved in this definition—the mobile body and places—are sufficient to account for the body's moving locally. The mover, i.e., the efficient cause of the body's change of place, is also required, according to Aristotle's principles, but the mover is not a thing explicitly mentioned in the definition. Ockham would concede that the mover also is required. Burley then builds on this commonly accepted point to make a further but controversial point: just as a mover is required, so motion as a thing distinct from the mover and all the other permanent things also is required. Why is this further thing "motion" required? This is the fundamental question to which a realist about motion must find an

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[36] Burley, *In Physicam* 3, fol. 65va: "Ad tertiam rationem, cum dicitur quod frustra fit per plura quod potest etc., concedo. Et cum dicitur quod aeque bene salvatur motus et ea quae dicuntur de motu ponendo quod motus non sit res distincta etc., dico per interemptionem, quia nisi motus sit res distincta a rebus permanentibus non salvatur motus nec illa quae dicuntur de motu. Et quando arguitur sic: ponendo quod aliquod corpus sit primo in uno loco et postea in alio etc., dico quod, si illa ratio valeat, sequeretur quod motus posset esse sine motore, quia ponendo solum quod aliquod corpus sit nunc in uno loco et iam in alio, circumscriptis quibuscumque aliis rebus a mobili et a loco, vere habemus motum localem. Igitur si ratio concluderet, frustra poneretur motor. Et quia impossibile est motum esse sine motore, ideo dico quod illa ratio non valet. Et tunc ad formam rationis, quando dicitur quod, si idem corpus sit primo in uno loco et postea in alio loco absque quacumque re alia, vere habemus motum, dico quod illud claudit contradictionem, scilicet quod idem corpus nunc sit in uno loco et iam in alio absque quacumque re alia. Nam sicut contradictionem includit quod idem corpus nunc sit in uno loco et iam in alio absque motore transmutante corpus de uno loco ad alium, ita includit contradictionem quod idem corpus nunc sit in uno loco et iam in alio absque motu quo formaliter transfertur de uno loco in alium".

answer. Burley does attempt one at the very end of the passage: motion is the thing that makes it *formally* possible for a body to be transferred from a place to another. The adverb "formally"—I think—is the crucial one in Burley's answer. It suggests that motion as a distinct thing accounts for the body's change at the level of formal causality, in contrast with the mover, which accounts for it at the level of efficient causality. Thus, motion as a distinct thing is a sort of formal cause of a body's change. In Aristotle's ontology, formal causes are forms. For example, heat as qualitative form is the formal cause of a body's being hot. As a realist Burley would deny that motion is properly speaking a form because he assumes that forms are acquired through motion—e.g., heat is acquired by a body through the process of becoming hot—and thus motion as the thing through which a form is acquired—a way towards a form- must be distinct from a form. Yet, I think that he treats motion as a quasi-form, that is, a thing having the same causal role of a genuine Aristotelian form. For example, just as heat—which is a genuine form—is the formal cause of a body's *being hot*, similarly motion as a quasi-form inhering in the body that becomes hot is the formal cause of the body's *becoming hot*.

## 2. *Time*

According to Burley, time also is a successive thing, the existence of which is guaranteed by the existence of the present instant joining together the past and the future.[37] In Burley's realist view about successive things, time as a successive thing cannot be reduced to permanent things. For example, the time taken by a body to pass from a place to another cannot be accounted for simply in terms of the body and places and the mover, which are all permanent things. The body's passing from one place to another, however, also involves a successive thing, for Burley, namely, the locomotion of this body. The question then arises of whether the time of the locomotion of the body is in some way reducible to the locomotion itself of this body or rather is a successive thing in its own right distinct from that locomotion and, more generally, whether motion and time are two distinct successive things or not. This is a major controversial issue in the medieval debate about the ontological status of time. Realism about successive things is not enough to answer the question about the

[37] See above, 276–279.

real distinction between motion and time, because both motion and time are successive. Also, both Aristotle and Averroes seem to deny a real distinction between motion and time. Aristotle defines time as some kind of number of motion so that the relation between time and motion is analogous to that between a number and the things numbered by it. He then argues that the existence of a number depends on the soul (that is, on the rational act of counting a collection of things), thus implying that also time as a number of motion is not a mind-independent thing distinct from motion but its existence depends on the soul. In explaining Aristotle's view, Averroes posits that time is in some way composed of motion and an operation of the human soul of distinguishing the successive phases of motion, so that the difference between time and motion is given by a rational operation.[38] At Burley's time, Ockham also follows Aristotle's and Averroes' reductionist view on time, maintaining that the term "time" does not suppose for any (permanent) extra-mental thing distinct from those denoted by the term "motion" so that the same set of extra-mental things are enough to account for both time and motion, although "time" also denotes a mental act of counting, i.e., measuring, motion. According to Burley, on the contrary, motion and time are distinct (mind-independent) successive things. Motion as successive thing is a way towards a form (in Averroes' terms)—a thing in the category of passion—and functions as a formal cause of a body's change. Time is a quantity and more precisely a successive quantity. This quantity inheres in motion as its subject and functions as the formal cause of a motion's property of having temporally distinct phases. Thus, in Burley's view, it is necessary to posit time as a successive thing distinct from motion because it is in virtue of time that motion is a successive thing.[39] In the first part of this section I will present Burley's discussion of the distinction between time and motion, which is where his realism about time most expressly appears. In the second part I will deal with Burley's interpretation of Aristotle's and Averroes' reductionist positions. As to Averroes in particular,

[38] On Aristotle and Averroes, see below, 292–299.

[39] On the medieval debate about the ontological status of time, see especially Maier, *Metaphysische Hintergründe der Spätscholastichen Naturphilosophie*, 64–91 (Burley's position is presented at 86–89). On Ockham's position see especially McCord Adams, *William Ockham*, 2: 853–899. On Burley's view see Dirk-Jan Dekker, "Time and Motion in Walter Burley's Late *Expositio* on Aristotle's *Physics*," *Early Science and Medicine* 6, 3 (2001), 185–203. Dekker argues that Burley's realism about time is not as extreme as Maier presents it and that his position is mainly a restatement and further elaboration of Averroes' opinion. I will argue that Dekker's interpretation is not correct. See below, 296–297.

just as in the case of motion, so in the case of time too, Burley treats Averroes as an *auctoritas* whose views deserve great consideration and should be saved. Accordingly, he apparently accepts the main claims of Averroes about time. The way in which Burley explains these claims, however, is perfectly compatible with his realism.

### 2.1. *Time as Successive Quantity of Motion*

In positing that time is a thing distinct from motion, Burley takes very seriously the problem of showing that this position is legitimate and does not violate Ockham's razor-principle.[40] It is also clear that the main obstacle in justifying this distinction is that both motion and time are successive. This common property of being successive is not only useless to distinguish time from motion but may also be taken to show that in fact time and motion are the same. Indeed an opinion reported by Burley relies on the principle "whatever has in its nature something past and something future is time" to infer that time is the same as motion: since motion too, being a successive thing, has past and future parts, it follows from this principle that time and motion are the same.[41] Burley thinks that this principle is wrong: the condition of having past and future parts is not sufficient to define time and to distinguish it from other successive things, like the deluge and the Trojan war, which are commonly taken not to be time.[42] Another condition is required:

> Thus, it is necessary that in addition to that condition there is another, namely, that whatever has *by itself* that something of it is past and something future is time. Accordingly, in short, motion does not have by itself that something of it is past and something future, because motion is not said to be past except because it was in past time nor is a part of motion prior

[40] Differently from the case of motion, Burley does not give an explicit report of Ockham's view on time.

[41] Burley, *In Physicam* 4, fol. 127rb: "Et ratio ponentium motum esse tempus fuit illa: quicquid est in cuius natura est quod habeat duas partes, videlicet unam praeteritam et aliam futuram est tempus; nunc inter omnia quae videntur esse tempus ipse motus tantum est qui recipit in se praeteritum et futurum [sive praeteritum et praesens]; ergo motus est tempus. . . Ad primum illorum respondet Avicenna dicens quod eorum ratio qui posuerunt tempus esse motum innititur uni propositioni non probabili, quae est illa: quicquid habet in sua natura aliquid praeteritum et aliquid futurum est tempus". As is clear from this passage, Burley finds this opinion in Avicenna.

[42] Ibid.: "Sed illud non est probabile nec concessum, quoniam multa sunt quae non sunt tempus quae tamen habent in seipsis aliquid praeteritum et aliquid futurum, sicut diluvium et bellum troianum".

> and another posterior except because a part of motion was in past time and another in future time nor is a motion said to be past except because it was in past time. From this it is evident that the before and after in duration primarily and essentially are in time and they are not in motion except because of time, that is, because motion is joined to time. *From this it follows that time really differs from motion*.[43]

In my opinion, this passage contains the most incisive formulation given by Burley of his realism about time. Burley's strategy to show that time and motion are two distinct successive things consists in pointing out that succession—the past and the future- belong in different ways to them: time is the thing to which succession primarily belongs whereas motion is a thing to which it belongs only derivatively, that is, because of time. Motion inherits its succession from time: both motion and time have temporally prior and posterior parts, but it is because of the priority and posteriority of the parts of time that these priority and posteriority are also found in the parts of motion. In this perspective, the fact that motion is successive does not rule out the existence of time as a successive thing distinct from motion. On the contrary, it leads to posit the existence of time as the thing that accounts for the being successive of motion.

Burley gives a more detailed presentation of the basic ideas contained in the passage above in a *dubium* devoted specifically to the question of whether time is the same as motion.[44] While in the passage quoted above he simply assumes that time is the thing to which succession primarily belongs in the *dubium* he argues for that assumption. In that context, using an Aristotelian terminology, Burley refers to the succession in question as the before and after according to duration, that is, the before and after such that the before cannot be temporally simultaneous with the after. His argument is the following:

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[43] Ibid., fol. 127rb–va: "Unde oportet quod praeter illa sit quaedam alia condicio, videlicet quod quicquid ex seipso est quod aliquid eius est praeteritum et aliquid futurum est tempus. Unde breviter motus non habet a seipso quod aliquid eius est praeteritum et aliquid futurum, quia motus non dicitur praeteritus nisi quia fuit in tempore praeterito, nec una pars motus est prior et alia posterior nisi quia una pars fuit in tempore praeterito et alia in tempore futuro, nec dicitur motus praeteritus nisi quia fuit in tempore praeterito. Ex quibus apparet quod prius et posterius secundum durationem primo et essentialiter sunt in tempore et non sunt in motu nisi ratione temporis, ut scilicet quia motus est coniunctus tempori. Ex quibus sequitur quod tempus realiter differt a motu".

[44] Burley, *In Physicam* 4, fols. 130ra, 130va–131va.

(i) Since the before and after in duration are found in many things, there must be one of these things (i.e., one kind of thing) that has primarily and by itself this before and after.
(ii) The thing that has primarily and by itself the before and after in duration is time.[45]

The major premise (i), about the existence of a thing that is primarily successive, is left unproved and taken as evident. The minor premise (ii), about the identification of time with the thing that is primarily successive, is proved with two short arguments. The first appeal to the common conception of time, the way we all think of time. We cannot conceive time—Burley claims—without conceiving the before and after in duration, and conversely we cannot conceive the before and after in duration without conceiving time.[46] For this argument to be successful in proving that time is a thing distinct from motion, it is required that motion is not such that the conception of motion too reciprocally entails the conception of the before and after in duration. But is it true that we can conceive a motion without conceiving it as temporally successive? Burley raises this question and replies that:

> Motion can be conceived without the before and after in duration because I can conceive or believe that a motion is simultaneous as a whole, e.g., that something instantaneously passes from the place of fire to the place of

[45] Ibid., fol. 130va–b: "Circa primam dubitationem et circa totam materiam de tempore est intelligendum quod accipiendo tempus pro eo quod hoc nomen 'tempus' denominat, i.e., accipiendo tempus pro illo pro quo hoc nomen 'tempus' supponit, quando accipitur personaliter, quod tempus ut sic est illud in quo primo et per se sunt prius et posterius secundum durationem, quae prius et posterius non sunt simul, sed, cum prius est, non est posterius, et cum posterius est, non est prius. Et cum in rebus sint prius et posterius secundum hunc intellectum, ut patet in ludis agonisticis et in nundis (?) et in aliis multis, oportet quod sit aliquid in quo primo et ex se sint prius et posterius secundum intellectum praedictum. Sed illud in quo sunt primo et ex se prius et posterius secundum durationem est tempus…". At the beginning of this passage Burley refers to his distinction between the denomination (or personal supposition) and the signification of the term "time". His view is that the thing that the tem "time" denominates, that is, the thing of which it is truly predicated, is the duration or successive quantity of motion (which he argues here to be distinct from motion) but the thing that "time" signifies is the successive quantity of motion measured by the soul and so a composite of two things: the successive quantity of motion and a mental operation. For the signification of "time" see below 295–297.

[46] Ibid., fol. 130vb: "Sed illud in quo sunt primo et ex se prius et posterius secundum durationem est tempus, ut patet per communem conceptionem, quoniam concipiens prius et posterius secundum durationem concipit tempus et omnis concipiens tempus concipit prius et posterius secundum durationem. Unde quicumque concipit tempus eo ipso concipit aliquid habens prius et posterius secundum durationem".

> earth. Accordingly, in the definition of motion neither succession nor the before and after in duration of time are posited. And therefore I say that motion can be conceived without succession and without the prior and posterior in duration.[47]

Burley's point here is not that motion exists or can exist without temporal succession. Motion is a successive thing and not a permanent thing and being a successive thing it necessarily involves succession. His point is rather that the succession that necessarily accompanies motion is not a necessary condition to conceive motion. Motion can be conceived as simultaneous. The fact that succession is not a condition of the intelligibility of motion is taken by Burley to show that succession is not a definitory property of motion. In Aristotle's definition,[48] motion is the act of what is potential *qua* potential, and in this definition the before and after in duration does not appear. This is also coherent with Burley's own view about motion as a quasi-form or formal cause of a body's change.[49] If becoming hot, e.g., is the thing in virtue of which formally a body becomes hot, this description of becoming hot does not immediately entail temporal succession. On the contrary, succession is a condition of the intelligibility of time and hence a definitory property of it. Indeed, Aristotle defines time as a number of motion with respect to the before and after,[50] and according to Burley, by "before and after" Aristotle means the before and after in duration.

The second argument for premise (ii) appeals to a sufficient condition for a thing to be primarily successive. It must be such that it has the before and after not in relation to something else (*per habitudinem ad aliud*) and, conversely, in relation to it the other things have the before and after in duration. Time and not motion satisfies this condition:

> A motion is not said to be prior to another motion except because it was in a prior time nor was the deluge prior to the Trojan war except because it was in a prior time, but a time is said to be prior to another time primarily and essentially, not in relation to something else. For a time is not said to

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[47] Ibid., fol. 130vb: "Motus potest concipi sine priori et posteriori secundum durationem, quoniam possum concipere vel opinari quod aliquis motus sit totus simul, ut scilicet quod aliquid subito moveatur de loco ignis ad locum terrae. Unde in definitione motus non ponitur successio nec prius et posterius secundum durationem temporis, et ideo dico quod motus potest concipi sine successione et sine priori et posteriori secundum durationem".

[48] Aristotle, *Physics* 3.1, 201a9–11.

[49] See above, 284.

[50] Aristotle, *Physics* 4.11, 219b1–2.

> be prior to another because it was in a prior motion or together with a prior motion, and therefore time primarily and per se has the before and after in duration.[51]

The point here is that the temporal ordering of different motions or different phases of a motion is defined by time, whereas the temporal ordering of different times is intrinsic to time itself. In particular, the relation of a motion to time is thought of as analogous to the relation of a material substance, that is, a body, to its extension. Just as a material substance has extended parts in virtue of its extension but the extension of a material substance has parts by itself and not because of its inherence in a material substance, similarly motion has temporally extended parts (the before and after in duration) because of time, while time has temporally extended parts by itself. This analogy can be made closer. For, a thing that primarily has extended parts ("part outside part") is a quantity in Burley's interpretation of Aristotle's categories. Accordingly, time, like spatial extension, is a quantity.[52] The difference between the two is that while the parts of spatial extension can exist simultaneously, the parts of time can only exist one after another, that is, in medieval terms, spatial extension is a permanent quantity while time is a successive quantity. Furthermore, just as spatial extension makes a corporeal substance spatially extended by inhering in it, so time makes motion temporally extended by inhering in it. Thus, time is a successive quantity and its proper subject is motion.[53]

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[51] Burley, *In Physicam* 4, fol. 130vb: "Unus motus non dicitur prior alio nisi quia fuit in priori tempore nec diluvium fuit prius bello troiano nisi quia fuit in priori tempore, sed quod unum tempus dicitur prius alio primo et essentialiter, non per habitudinem ad aliquid aliud. Non enim dicitur unum tempus prius alio quia fuit in motu vel cum motu priori, et ideo tempus primo et per se habet prius et posterius secundum durationem".

[52] Ibid., fol. 131ra: "Viso igitur quod illa res quae est tempus habet primo et ex se prius et posterius secundum durationem, patet manifeste quod illa res quae est tempus est essentialiter et per se quantitas. Et hoc potest sic patere. Illud quod primo et ex se habet partem extra partem per se est quantitas; sed tempus est huiusmodi; ergo tempus est quantitas primo et per se".

[53] The same view on the dependence of the succession of motion on time as successive quantity of motion is found in Thomas Wylton: "Ergo imaginor sic quod, sicut lignum habet partem extra partem per quantitatem inhaerentem sibi, quod est accidens posterius [in] ligno, sed eadem partibilitas quae est quantitatis primo per essentiam est ligni partecipatione et per accidens, ratione quantitatis extendentis lignum, sic imaginor hic. Motus in esse suo naturali habet partem extra partem, puta partem priorem et posteriorem. Ista autem partibilitas extra eius quidditatem est et sibi inest per quantitatem inhaerentem sibi, puta tempus. Ideo eadem partibilitas, puta secundum prius et posterius, quae est temporis essentialiter, est motus primi participatione, in hoc quod est subiectum istius quantitatis quae est tempus." (Thomas Wylton, *Quaestiones super Physicam* 4.20, ms. Cesena, Biblioteca Malatestiana, Plut. VIII sin. 2, fol. 65va, lin. 46–vb, lin. 10). On Wylton's

The view that time is a successive quantity inhering in motion is very common among medieval realists about time. One major reason for this is that the various ingredients of this view can be found in Aristotle. For example, in the *Categories*,[54] Aristotle enumerates time among the things in the category of quantity, and in the *Physics* he suggests that time is successive and that it is something of motion, more specifically its number,[55] which is interpreted by a realist as implying that time is an accident of motion. Much more original is the way in which Burley argues for this common view. As we have seen, the crucial principle of Burley's argumentation is that of the ontological priority of the succession in time over the succession in motion. Although this principle may appear very plausible to a modern reader, it is not an Aristotelian principle. On the contrary, Aristotle seems to reject this principle, as Burley knows well:

> But against this seems to be the saying of the Philosopher, who says that the before and after exist in motion because they exist in magnitude and that the before and after exist in time because they exist in the first motion; therefore, the before and after are in magnitude prior than in motion and in motion prior than in time.[56]

Having in mind the case of a local motion, Aristotle considers the respective orders of before and after in the spatial extension over which a body moves—that is the ordering in the parts of the spatial extension—in the local motion of the body, and in the time during which this motion takes place. He then claims that the spatial order is the basic one, while motion inherits its order from the spatial order and time in turn inherits its order from the order in motion.[57] As Aristotelian scholars point out, there are obvious problems in Aristotle's attempt to derive the temporal order from that of spatial extension and of motion.[58] Burley, however, tries to save Aristotle's claim and reconcile it with his own view on the priority of

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realism about motion, see Cecilia Trifogli, "Il problema dello statuto ontologico del tempo nelle *Quaestiones super Physicam* di Thomas Wylton e di Giovanni di Jandun," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 1, 2 (1990), 491–548.

[54] Aristotle, *Categories* 6, 4b20–25.

[55] Aristotle, *Physics* 4.10, 217b32–218a8; 4.11, 219a9–10, 219b1–2.

[56] Burley, *In Physicam* 4, 130vb: "Sed contra illud videtur esse dictum Philosophi, qui dicit quod prius et posterius sunt in motu quia sunt in magnitudine et quod prius et posterius sunt in tempore quia sunt in primo motu; ergo prius et posterius sunt prius in magnitudine et in motu quam in tempore".

[57] Aristotle, *Physics* 4.11, 219a14–19.

[58] For more details about the problems in Aristotle's derivation and the difficulties created by it to some 13th-century realists, see Trifogli, *Oxford Physics*, 231–237.

the temporal order over that of motion. He does this by distinguishing two kinds of priority: "material" priority and "formal" priority, for short. Leaving these two notions of priority without explanation, Burley applies them as follows: Aristotle's order is that of material priority and not that of formal priority. In particular, the before and after in motion are prior to those in time by the priority of matter to form, but the before and after in time are prior to those in motion by the priority of form to matter.[59] The rationale behind this distinction seems to be that motion, being the subject of time and hence analogous to the matter of time, is a necessary condition for the existence of time and hence derivatively for any intrinsic property of time and in particular for the before and after in duration, while time, being a form inhering in motion, is formally responsible for the before and after in duration in motion. It is clear then that although Burley does not openly reject Aristotle's claim, his attempt to save it is not a concession to Aristotle's reductionist view about time.

### 2.2. *Burley's Interpretation of Aristotle's and Averroes' Views*

Aristotle defines time as a number of motion.[60] Following the standard medieval exegesis of this definition, Burley maintains that by "number of motion" Aristotle actually means measure of motion.[61] A common assumption about measuring is that the measure and the thing measured by it are things of the same kind. In Burley's realist view, however, motion and time are two distinct kinds of thing: motion here is taken as a thing in the category of passion, while time is a quantity inhering in motion, which is also called by Burley "duration of motion". How can then time be the measure of motion?[62] Burley's reply is that what is primarily measured

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[59] Burley, *In Physicam* 4, fol. 130vb: "Prius et posterius secundum durationem sunt in tempore per prius et posterius in motu tamquam propter materiam. Sed in motu sunt prius et posterius secundum durationem formaliter propter prius et posterius in tempore. Unde prius et posterius in motu sunt priora quam prius et posterius in tempore prioritate materiae ad formam, sed prius et posterius in tempore sunt priora quam prius et posterius in motu prioritate formae ad materiam".

[60] Aristotle, *Physics* 4.11, 219b1–2.

[61] Burley, *In Physicam* 4, fol. 133rb: "Dico quod numerus accipitur in illa definitione non pro numero simpliciter sed pro mensura continua determinata ad mensurandum certum genus entium, scilicet motum. Unde sicut pinta est mensura determinata ad mensurandum liquidum, ut vinum seu aquam et huiusmodi, ita tempus est mensura determinata ad mensurandum motum".

[62] Ibid., fol. 133va: "Tempus est quantitas continua; sed quantitas continua non est mensura alicuius rei de genere passionis, quia mensura et mensuratum sunt unigenia; ergo non videtur quod tempus sit mensura motus de genere passionis, cuius contrarium tu ponis".

by time is not motion as a thing in the category of passion, but the duration of a motion—the successive quantity of a motion—that is, the time of that motion.[63] In Burley's interpretation, therefore, in defining time as the measure of motion Aristotle is not defining the successive quantity or duration as such of every motion but that particular duration that serves as the measure of the duration of every motion. In the medieval tradition, this is the duration of the first motion, the motion of the first heavenly sphere. This duration is also called by Burley "first duration" or "first natural time".[64] It is the duration of the first motion that we use in measuring the duration of every other motion.

Burley's view that Aristotle defines time as the duration of the first motion should be distinguished from Averroes' view that time is the duration of the first motion. In defending Aristotle's claim that there is only one time, Averroes has to deal with the problem arising from the assumption that time is an accident of motion. Since there are many motions, from this assumption it seems to follow that there are also many times, as many as there are motions, given the principle that the unity and multiplicity of an accident is determined by that of its subject. Averroes solves this problem by restricting the subject of time to the first motion: time is not an accident of every motion but only of the first motion—it exists only in the first motion—although it serves as a measure for every other motion. Therefore, time is one because its subject is only one motion.[65] According to Burley, on the contrary, time as successive quantity is an accident of every motion. Indeed, every motion necessarily is successive and, as we have seen, time is the inhering quantity that makes motion successive. Accordingly, Burley has to admit that there are many times taken as successive quantities, as many as there are motions. He maintains, however, that Aristotle's definition applies only to the time of the

[63] Ibid., fol. 134ra: "Dico quod quantitas continua non est prima mensura alicuius rei de genere passionis quia prima mensura et primum mensuratum sunt unigenia, tamen quantitas continua bene secundario et ex consequenti potest esse mensura rei alterius generis. Et sic dico quod tempus mensurat motum quia mensurat quantitatem successivam motus primo secundum durationem ipsius motus. Et hoc vult Philosophus dicens quod tempus mensurat motum quia mensurat quantitatem accidentem motui. Unde sicut ulna non mensurat pannum nisi quia mensurat quantitatem accidentem panno ita tempus non mensurat motum nisi quia mensurat quantitatem accidentem motui, scilicet durationem vel successionem motus".

[64] See the passage from Burley's *Physics*-commentary quoted below, 294.

[65] On Averroes' view on the unity of time, its reception in the Latin Middle Ages and more generally on the debate about the unity of time, see Maier, *Metaphysische Hintergründe der Spätscholastichen Naturphilosophie*, 92–137.

first motion because only the time of the first motion is the appropriate measure of the time or duration of the other motions. As to the problem of the unity of time, Burley's view is that Aristotle is correct in claiming that there is only one time because he defines time as the duration of the first motion and this duration is one since the first motion is one.[66]

There is a further point in Burley's interpretation of Aristotle's definition, which is crucial to understand his defence of Aristotle's claim that the existence of time depends on the soul.[67] The point is that the time defined by Aristotle as measure of motion is not the first duration as such, namely, taken simply as the successive quantity of the first motion, but:

> the first measured duration, the extremes of which are numbered in act, so that "time" here defined signifies the same as this whole sentence "the first duration measured by the soul the extremes of which are numbered in act". And the reason why Aristotle defines "time" in that signification and not in another is because Aristotle does not determine here about time except insofar as it is the first and common measure in act of motion and such a measure is the first duration, not taken absolutely, but the first duration numbered and measured.[68]

The idea here is that Aristotle defines time as measure of motion but the first duration as such—as successive quantity of the first motion—is not adequate to have the role of measure of motion. For being the measure of motion the first duration must in turn be measured by the soul. What Burley seems to have in mind with this requirement is the following. Every measure properly speaking is a quantity. Being a quantity, however, is not enough to be a measure. The further condition is that there

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[66] Burley, *In Physicam* 4, fol. 132rb: "primum tempus consequitur unum motum et etiam quodlibet tempus consequitur suum motum ut motum cuius est mensura intrinseca. Et concedo quod omnem motum consequitur tempus et quod tempus multiplicatur ad multiplicationem motuum. Sed tempus proprissime dictum non multiplicatur ad multiplicationem motuum". On time *proprissime dictum*, see ibid., fol. 131vb: "Maxime vero proprie accipitur tempus pro duratione primi mobilis quia motus primi mobilis est primus inter omnes motus et maxime uniformis et illae sunt condiciones essentiales motus quem tempus primo consequitur. Motus etiam primi mobilis est velocissimus et ideo maxime habet rationem mensurae quoniam illa duratio primi mobilis est primum tempus, sicut motus primi mobilis est primus inter omnes motus".

[67] See Aristotle, *Physics* 4.14, 223a16–29.

[68] Burley, *In Physicam* 4, fol. 133rb: "prima duratio mensurata cuius extrema sunt actu numerata, ita quod 'tempus' hic definitum signat idem quod haec tota oratio 'prima duratio mensurata per animam cuius durationis extrema sunt actu numerata'. Et ratio propter quam Philosophus definit 'tempus' in illa significatione et non in alia est quia Philosophus non determinat hic de tempore nisi ut est prima et communis mensura in actu ipsius motus, et talis mensura est duratio prima sed non absolute, sed duratio prima actu numerata et mensurata".

must be units of measure in that quantity. In the case of time, the standard units are parts of the duration of the first motion, e.g., hours, days, weeks, months, years and so on. There is an important difference, however, between the metrical structure of a discrete quantity, i.e., of number, and that of a continuous quantity. In a discrete quantity there are natural units of measure. These are the indivisible elements of which a discrete quantity is ultimately composed, e.g., the units of number. In a continuous quantity, however, there are no indivisible elements as components and so there are no natural units of measure. The units of measure are fixed by human convention.[69] Since the duration of the first motion is a continuous quantity, an intellectual operation is then required to fix the units of measure in this duration. Thus, while the first duration as such exists independently of the soul, it can have the role of measure only in virtue of an intellectual operation consisting in determining the parts of it that serve as units of measure of the duration of the other motions.

Burley tries to clarify the ontological structure of the time defined by Aristotle as measured duration with the following analogy:

> It must be understood that as this spoken expression "the stone understood" signifies something composed of the stone and of the intellection, and however it is truly predicated of the stone—for this proposition "the stone is the stone understood" is true- so this name "time" signifies something composed of the successive quantity of motion and from the action of the soul, and however this spoken term "time" is truly predicated of the successive quantity of motion because the successive quantity of motion alone is time just as the stone alone is the stone understood. And in whatever way "time" is taken—either for the thing that it denominates or for the thing that it signifies, that consequence "time exists; therefore, the soul exists" is always valid, and similarly this consequence "no soul exists; therefore, no time exists", as this consequence "the stone understood exists; therefore, the soul exists" is valid. If, however, a name were imposed to exactly signify the successive quantity of motion, e.g., if *a* exactly signified the successive quantity of motion, this consequence would not be valid "*a* exists; therefore, the soul exists", just as that consequence "the stone exists; therefore, the soul exists" is not valid, although it follows "the stone understood exists; therefore, the soul exists".[70]

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[69] Ibid., fol. 133vb: "quia continuum est divisibile in infinitum, ideo in continuis non est aliqua prima et una mensura secundum naturam, sed solum secundum institutionem hominum... Unde prima mensura in discretis est indivisibile simpliciter, sed prima mensura in continuis est aliquod indivisibile secundum institutionem sive secundum sensum".

[70] Ibid., fol. 147va–b: "Intelligendum quod sicut haec vox 'lapis intellectus' significat quoddam copulatum esse ex lapide et ex intellectione, et tamen vere dicitur de lapide—

In the last part of this passage Burley makes it clear that the successive quantity of motion is an extra-mental thing, something that exists independently of the soul. Since, as we have seen, according to Burley the successive quantity of motion is a thing distinct from motion, it is clear that also in his defence of Aristotle's claim about the dependence of the existence of time on the soul Burley sticks to his realist view about time, according to which motion and time (understood as successive quantity) are two distinct extra-mental things. What depends on the soul is not the successive quantity of motion as such but the successive quantity of motion taken as measure, just as what depends on the soul is not the stone as such but the stone understood. In Burley's interpretation, Aristotle then is right when he claims that the existence of time depends on the soul because according to him the term "time" does not signify the successive quantity of motion as such, but the successive quantity as measure, which is analogous to the stone understood.

In claiming that the significate of the term "time" is a composite of the successive quantity of a motion and an action of the soul Burley suggests that time has a composite ontological status: it exists partially outside the soul and partially in the soul in the sense that one of the two components of the significate of the term "time" is an extra-mental entity, namely, the successive quantity of motion, while the other is a mental operation. A similar composite ontological status is ascribed to time by Averroes. In his paper on "Time and Motion in Walter Burley's late *Expositio* on Aristotle's *Physics*" Dirk-Jan Dekker maintains that Burley's view on the composite ontological status of time is essentially the same as that of Averroes.[71] This interpretation, however, is not correct. Burley's view on the composition of time is not the same as that of Averroes because the components in the two compositions are not the same: for Averroes the extra-mental component is motion and for Burley is the successive quantity of motion.

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nam haec est vera 'lapis est lapis intellectus'—ita hoc nomen 'tempus' significat unum copulatum ex quantitate successiva motus et ex actione animae, et tamen haec vox 'tempus' vere dicitur de quantitate successiva motus, quoniam sola quantitas successiva motus est tempus, sicut solus lapis est lapis intellectus. Et qualitercumque accipiatur 'tempus' sive pro eo quod denominat sive pro eo quod significat, semper est illa consequentia bona 'tempus est; ergo anima est', et haec similiter 'nulla anima est; ergo nullum tempus est', sicut haec consequentia est bona 'lapis intellectus est; ergo anima est'. Si tamen aliquod nomen imponatur praecise ad significandum quantitatem successivam motus, ut si *a* significaret praecise quantitatem successivam motus, haec consequentia non valeret '*a* est; igitur anima est', sicut illa consequentia non valet 'lapis est; ergo anima est', quamvis sequatur 'lapis intellectus est; ergo anima est' ".

[71] See Dekker, "Time and Motion," especially pp. 200–201.

In support of this difference between the two compositions, let us see some details of Averroes' view and Burley's interpretation of it. Averroes presents his view in the following passage, which is quoted *verbatim* by Burley:

> Let us say therefore to this that outside the mind only motion exists and time comes to be only when the mind divides motion in the before and the after. And this is the meaning of the number of motion, that is, that motion is numbered. Therefore, the substance of time that is a quasi-form of time is number and the thing that is a quasi-matter of time is the continuous motion, since time is not number taken absolutely but the number of motion.[72]

Averroes here considers time as a composite of a material element and a formal element, the form and the matter of time, for short. The matter of time is motion and this is the only component of time with extra-mental reality. The form of time is number and more precisely a mental operation of numbering, i.e., measuring, motion. In Averroes' decomposition of time no extra-mental thing distinct from motion appears. Accordingly, Averroes' decomposition reflects a reductionist view about the ontological status of time: time is not an extra-mental thing distinct from motion, because the difference between time and motion is given by a mental operation of measuring motion. Compared to Burley's decomposition, what is missing from Averroes' decomposition is the successive quantity of motion as a thing really distinct from motion.

Burley has to do some heavy exegetical work in trying to reconcile Averroes' view in the passage above with his own realist view. As to the claim that outside the mind only motion exist, he understands it in the qualified sense that of the three main things required for motion, namely, the mobile body, motion itself and time—which he takes here as the successive quantity of motion—only the mobile body and motion exist outside the soul simultaneously either as a whole or as to some of their parts. The mobile body is a permanent thing and therefore exists simultaneously

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[72] Averroes, *In Physicam* 4.109, fol. 187raC: "Dicamus igitur ad hoc quod extra mentem non est nisi motus (motum *ed.*) et tempus non fit nisi quando mens dividit motum in prius et posterius. Et haec est intentio numeri motus, i.e., motum esse numeratum. Ergo substantia temporis quae est in eo quasi forma est numerus, et quod est in eo quasi materia est motus continuus, quoniam non est numerus simpliciter, sed numerus motus". See also Burley, *In Physicam* 4, fols. 139vb–140ra. On Averroes's view and its medieval Latin interpretations see Cecilia Trifogli, "Averroes's Doctrine of Time and Its Reception in the Scholastic Debate," in *The Medieval Concept of Time*, ed. Pasquale Porro (Leiden, 2001), 57–82.

as a whole, while motion is a successive thing but the parts of motion corresponding to the parts of the mobile body exist simultaneously (since the body moves simultaneously as a whole). On the contrary, time exists outside the soul but not simultaneously: the only parts of time are temporal parts, which do not and cannot exist simultaneously.[73] Thus, in Burley's interpretation, Averroes' claim is not about extra-mental existence as such but about simultaneous extra-mental existence. Similarly, Averroes' claim that time comes to be when the mind divides motion is taken by Burley as a claim not about existence as such but about existence as measure: time exists without the soul but it comes to be a measure of motion in virtue of an operation of the soul.[74] As to Averroes' claim that the matter of time is a continuous motion, Burley distinguishes two meanings of "matter" and two meanings of the term "motion". "Matter" can be taken either as the matter in which, that is, the subject of a form, or the matter out of which, that is, the material component of a composite. "Motion" can be taken either in the standard significate of a thing in the category of passion—a way towards a form—or in an unusual and *ad hoc* significate of the successive quantity of motion (where motion is taken as a thing in the category of passion), for which the standard name is "time".[75] If matter is taken as the matter in which, then motion as a thing in the category of

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[73] Burley, *In Physicam* 4, fol. 140ra: "Primum est quod extra mentem non est nisi motus et motum, quod sic intelligo quod de his tribus requisitis ad motum, quae sunt mobile, motus et tempus, nihil est in actu actualitate simultatis quantum ad se totum vel quantum ad aliquas partes eius quarum quaelibet est extra aliam nisi motum, id est mobile, et motus, quoniam mobile est totum simul in actu et motus quantum ad aliquas eius partes quarum quaelibet est extra aliam <est> in actu simultatis quas habet secundum divisionem mobilis. . . sed tempus nec secundum se totum nec secundum aliquas eius partes quarum quaelibet est extra aliam est in actu actualitate simultatis, ut patet ex praedictis".

[74] Ibid.: "Secundum est quod tempus non fit nisi quando mens dividit motum in prius et posterius, quod sic intelligo, quod tempus non fit in actu mensurandi motum nisi quando mens dividit motum in prius et posterius . . . Illa tamen res de qua tempus praedicatur habet in actu esse existentiae sine actione mentis, sed non habet esse in actu mensurandi sine mente".

[75] Burley introduces the *ad hoc* significate of the term "motion" to save some claims by Aristotle and Averroes. See Burley, *In Physicam* 4, fol. 131rb: "Dico igitur quod accipiendo motum ut est de genere termini ad quem vel de genere passionis quod tempus non est motus. Sed tamen est intelligendum propter solutionem aliquarum auctoritatum quod motus potest accipi alio modo, videlicet pro successione transmutationis sive pro quantitate successiva ipsius transmutationis successivae, quae quantitas non est aliud quam duratio transmutationis successivae. Et quod motus potest accipi illo modo patet per Philosophum et Commentatorem, 5 *Metaphysicae*, capitulo de quantitate, ubi dicunt quod motus est quantitas . . . Tertio vero modo accipiendo motum sic est concedendum quod tempus est motus, quia tempus non est aliud quam quantitas successiva vel duratio transmutationis successivae".

passion is the matter of time, that is, the subject of time is motion taken as a thing in the category of passion. But if matter is taken as the material component of time, then motion taken in the *ad hoc* significate of the successive quantity of motion is the matter of time.[76] This complex reading of Averroes' claim is in agreement with Burley's realist view: motion taken as a thing in the category of passion is the subject of time taken as as successive quantity. Time defined by Aristotle as the successive quantity of motion measured by the soul is a composite of that successive quantity and an operation of the soul.

## *Conclusion*

Burley is a realist about both motion and time. He argues against Ockham that there are successive things distinct from permanent things and that motion and time are successive things. Motion is a successive thing belonging to the category of passion. This thing inheres in the mobile body while it changes as a quasi-form, that is, as something having the role of formal cause of a body's change. Time is a successive thing really distinct from motion. It is a successive quantity inhering in motion and that accounts for the property of motion of being successive. In Burley's view, while motion and time are both successive things, succession primarily belongs to time and secondarily to motion, that is, in virtue of time.

[76] Ibid.: "Quod dicitur illud <quod> est quasi materia est motus, si per motum intelligatur motus de genere passionis sic motus est materia temporis non ex qua sed in qua. Si vero per motum intelligatur motus qui est per se de genere quantitatis, scilicet quantitas successiva motus de genere passionis, sic materia rei significatae per hanc vocem 'tempus in actu' est motus continuus, quia haec vox 'tempus in actu' significat idem quod haec dictio 'motus qui est quantitas numerans seu mensurans motum de genere passionis' ".

CHAPTER TEN

# GENERATION AND CORRUPTION

Marek Gensler

## 1. *Authenticity and Dating*

The *De generatione* commentary has survived in four complete manuscript copies[1] and three small fragments. All complete copies are attributed to Burley,[2] and three of them are actually included in codices that contain other texts by him. None of the manuscripts gives the date of its composition.[3] What is worse, the commentary contains no reference to any other work of his. Still worse, none of Burley's other works mentions the *De generatione* commentary, even though some of them have references to Aristotle's work of that title. The only source information providing arguments for its authenticity and dating is, therefore, the commentary itself, with other works of Burley serving as material for comparison. Their analysis allows us to infer that the *De generatione* commentary was composed by Burley for teaching purposes in Oxford and that he must have ended work on it before he left for Paris, at the latest. Since commenting on *De generatione* did not belong to the compulsory part of the curriculum in the Arts Faculty in Oxford,[4] it is probable that Burley turned to that work only after he had fulfilled his duties as a regent master. Commenting on *Physics* and other obligatory texts certainly took time, so the earliest possible date for the *De generatione* commentary could be 1304, which

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[1] MSS Civitas Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 2151, fols. 149ra ff.; Oxford, All Souls 86, fols. 199ra ff.; London, Lambeth Palace 74, fols. 9ra ff., Durham, Cathedral Libr., C. IV. 23, fols. 4–23v, 35–66v.

[2] This is expressly stated in explicits: (Vatican) Explicit tractatus super libros *De generatione et corruptione* secundum dominum W. de Burley; (Oxford) Explicit expositio Walteri Burley super libros *De generatione et corruptione* et sequitur expositio eiusdem super libros *De somno et vigilia*; (London) Explicit tractatus super libros *De generatione et corruptione* secundum dominum W. de Burley finito libro sit laus et gloria Christo; (Durham) Explicit tractatus *De generatione et corruptione* secundum W. de Burley.

[3] See M. Gensler, *Kłopotliwa zmiana, czyli Waltera Burleya zmagania ze zmiennością rzeczy* (Łódź: 2007), 186–88.

[4] See J. Weisheipl, "*Curriculum* of the Faculty of Arts at Oxford in the Early Fourteenth Century," *Medieval Studies* 26 (1964), at 173–76.

marks the middle of his regency. It is possible, however, that he started it even later. Lecturing on *De generatione* was supposed to take one term only, so Burley could have done it in any of the years between 1304 and 1306/7, when he most probably concluded his regency, but the unfinished form of the commentary is an attractive argument for supporting the latter date, as it would explain why Burley had no time to polish his work. Even if the actual teaching had taken place earlier, the editing of his notes took place after finishing the lectures, and that would make spring 1308 an attractive *terminus* for that work, especially as he never returned to commenting on the *De generatione*. The argument seems strengthened by the fact that the early *Physics* commentary has a similar form[5] too.

## 2. *Structure*

Burley's *De generatione* commentary is a commentary *ad litteram textus* with one question. The commentary itself is rather brief, actually slightly shorter than the text it comments upon. One can notice that its author did not have much to say about many issues discussed by Aristotle. The commentary lacks an introduction, traditionally explaining the subject matter of the book. (Fortunately, he speaks about the subject matter of *De generatione* in another commentary of his, *De sophisticis elenchis*.)[6] It is possible that the introduction existed but was lost, yet since none of the existing manuscripts contains it, it seems more likely that it had never been composed (which is yet another sign of its unfinished state). Burley's commentary follows the structure of Averroes's middle commentary, sometimes—mostly in Book I—joining two *lectiones* together (and rarely dividing them up). In Book I, he has 50 *lectiones* for 90 in Averroes, but in Book II 65 for 70 in Averroes. These minor structural changes seem to be Burley's own ideas, for they do not imitate the changes introduced by other authors, such as Aquinas, whom Burley copied in this respect in his *Physics* commentary.[7]

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[5] The similarities between the Oxford commentaries on *Physics* and *De generatione* are discussed in the next section.

[6] See Burley, *Quaestiones libri Elenchorum*, MS Cambridge, St. John's College Library, D 25: "Liber *Physicorum* est de corpore mobili in communi, liber *De generatione* de eo mobili ad formam." I would like to thank Mischa von Perger for his kind permission to use his transcript of the text.

[7] See E.D. Sylla, "Walter Burley's Practice as a Commentator on Aristotle's *Physics*," *Medioevo* 27 (2002), at 353–54.

Uneven treatment of the commented material from Books I and II is a striking feature of Burley's commentary. It can already be seen by comparing the length of the two books. Although in Aristotle Book II is about one-third shorter than Book I, in Burley's commentary it is almost three times shorter, which can be taken as a sign of some deliberate decision that resulted from either lesser interest in the matters discussed in the book or a sudden loss of interest in commenting it or both. Unlike Book II, in Book I the commentary is quite carefully executed, with *lectiones* divided into sections.[8] What is lacking in Burley's commentary is questions concluding expositions; apparently Burley decided that it was sufficient to discuss about a dozen *dubia* (all but one in the first book) and only one question, following Book I. *Dubia* differ in length: the shortest ones are made up of two paragraphs, one of which presents the problem, while the other solves it. The longer ones are almost like questions: they include many arguments *pro* and *contra* and a detailed presentation of the author's *opinio propria*.[9]

The length of commentaries following the *lemmata* is surprisingly varied. As a rule, those in Book I are longer than the ones in Book II,[10] the shortest comments in both books are two and one sentences, respectively. In Book II, wherever the commentary is longer, we can recognize a paraphrase or quotation from Averroes's middle commentary on *De generatione et corruptione*; in places where the Commentator's interpretation

[8] Since the middle of the 13th century such arrangement of the material in commentaries was characteristic for notes prepared for the sake of lectures given on the commented work. See F. Del Punta, "The Genre of Commentaries in the Middle Ages and its Relation to the Nature and Originality of Medieval Thought," in *Was ist Philosophie im Mittelalter? Akten des X. Internationalen Kongresses für mittelalterliche Philosophie der Société Internationale pour l'Étude de la Philosophie Médiévale 25. bis 30. August 1997 in* Erfurt, ed. J.A. Aertsen and A. Speer, Miscellanea Mediaevalia 26 (Berlin: 1998), at 141–44; see also A. Kenny and J. Pinborg, "Medieval Philosophical Literature," in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, ed. N. Kretzmann, A. Kenny, and J. Pinborg (Cambridge: 1982), 18–20.

[9] For instance, the dubium "An qualibet pars aucti sit aucta" has the following structure: (1) *Argumenta ad unam partem*, 1–3; (2) *Responsio* contains four replies, the first three of which have several counterarguments and the fourth one contains a lengthy discussion of two problems: *Qualiter fiat augmentatio per extensionem in materia* and *Quomodo materia alimenti et materia membri se habeant*: *utrum una ponatur iuxta aliam vel una ingrediatur aliam* (two opinions with discussions of several arguments); (3) *Ad argumenta principalia* 1–3. Cf. Burley, *Commentarius in libros De generatione et corruptione*, in Gensler, *Kłopotliwa zmiana* (see n. 3 above), 251–67.

[10] Burley is by no means exceptional in treating the two books differently. In an earlier commentary on *De generatione* by a Parisian master, Giles of Orleans, Book I receives six times more attention than Book II. See Aegidius Aurelianensis, *Quaestiones super De generatione et corruptione*, ed. Z. Kuksewicz, (Bochumer Studien zur Philosophie) 18 (Amsterdam: 1993).

diverges too far from Aristotle, Burley prefers to summarize the Stagirite. This practice is employed also in Book I but never as visibly. Dependence on Averroes's middle commentary shows in Book I in another way too. Burley is rather economical with the choice of authorities he cites. It is only in the longer *dubia* and, naturally, in the question, that he cites more sources, although the list of authors he is referring to is still short. Of the authorities other than the Philosopher and Commentator, he cites only Alexander of Aphrodisias and Avicenna, but it is certain that the former and probable that the latter are quoted from Averroes. Avicenna's *Libri naturalium* is cited three times, and Alexander four times, but all four references are to the same problem. Medieval Latin authors do not fare much better: by their names, Burley mentions only two: Albert the Great (but the quotation in question is from Aristotle!) and Robert Grosseteste; he also mentions the anonymous author of the "Liber sex principiorum", but each of them only once. The comments introduced by *dicunt quidam* or *dicunt aliqui*, which often signal arguments of contemporary thinkers, are infrequent (only five in Book I and four in Book II) and they mostly precede references to contemporaries of Aristotle or Averroes, whose polemics Burley only relates.[11]

Burley's references to Aristotle and Averroes are dominated by two works: *De generatione et corruptione* itself and the middle commentary on it. Besides this, one can find the titles of nine more works by Aristotle, of which only four—*Physics, Metaphysics, De coelo et mundo*, and *Meteorologica*—are referred to more than once, while *De anima*, *De sensu et sensato, De morte et vita, Categories*, and *De Interpretatione* grace the pages of his work just once. Averroes fares even worse—apart from the *De generatione* commentary, Burley cites, rarely, his commentaries on the *Physics, Metaphysics, De coelo*, and *De anima*. These references can be found mostly in the *dubia* and question in Book I; only seven instances of them come from Book II (but both references to *Meteorologica* are there). As was the case with quotations from other authorities, the majority of Aristotle quotations were found by Burley in Averroes. On the first reading of Burley's book, however, his treatment of Averroes's middle commentary

[11] For instance, these are the authorities quoted in the *dubium* "Utrum actio sit ratione contrarietatis et passio ratione similitudinis": Averroes, *In de anima, In Physicam, In de coelo; Aristoteles, Metaphysica, De generatione et corruptione, De coelo et mundo, De morte et vita*; Avicenna, *Liber quartus naturalium*. Alexander and Robert are quoted in the *dubium* "An quaelibet pars aucti sit aucta"; Albert is quoted in the *dubium* "Utrum ista consequentia sit bona: Non est possibilis transmutatio secundum substantiam, igitur non est possibilis transmutatio in qualitatibus." See Gensler, *Kłopotliwa zmiana* (n. 3 above), 182.

on *De generatione* as a kind of intellectual quarry is not so manifest, for he reports only some of his quotations (marking them by *haec Commentator*) and references (*secundum Commentatorem*, *sicut dicit Commentator*), and most of the summaries are devoid of any signs of borrowing.[12]

It must be noted that the *De generatione* commentary is not unique in either its uneven treatment of the commented text or limited range of references. A lack of proportion in the treatment of various parts of the same commented text is not something unseen in other works of Burley—a similar phenomenon has been noticed by E.D. Sylla in Burley's Oxford *Expositio in libros Physicorum*. Nor is the dependence on a text by another author a rarity in Burley—the list of such works has not been made yet, but it is certain that it includes several positions composed in various periods of his life. As for the first observation, Sylla proposed a plausible explanation for Burley's Oxford *Physics* commentary: the reason why Burley treated later parts of the text lightly was the lack of time to finish the lectures, of which the commentary is the (edited) record;[13] the shorter part of the commentary would then be just a skeleton never covered with the flesh of arguments and explanations. Her argument could well hold for the *De generatione* commentary: when reading its second book one can really sense the pressure of time with comments going down in size after Chapter 4.

As for the other observation, dependence on Averroes and a limited scope of philosophical sources can also be noticed in Burley's Oxford *Physics* commentary. E.D. Sylla, who compared the versions of Burley's *Physics*, observes that: "With Burley's commentary in hand, one would hardly have

[12] For instance,

| Averroes, *In Aristotelis de generatione et corruptione libros commentarium medium*, ed. F.H. Forbes and S. Kurland (Cambridge: 1956), 137, 22–26. | Walter Burley, *Commentarius in libros De generatione et corruptione*, 364. |
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| Mixtio contrariorum sit quando alterum non dominatur supra alterum, neque habent equalem potentiam; si enim potentia alterius fuerit simpliciter dominans, erit corruptio dominati et generatio dominantis, et si equales fuerint potentie, tunc non fiet aliqua forma, ut declaratum est in quarto *Metheorum*. | Dicit etiam quod mixtio elementorum fit quando alterum non dominatur supra alterum, neque habent aequalem potentiam. Si enim potentia alterius sit simpliciter dominans, est corruptio dominati et generatio dominantis. Et si aequales fuerunt, tunc non fit aliqua forma, sicut declaratum est in quarto *Metheorum*. |

[13] See Sylla, "Walter Burley's Practice" (see n. 7 above), 352–53.

needed to look at Averroes's commentary, because Burley nearly always reported extensively what Averroes had to say. Partly through Averroes, Burley reported the commentaries of ancient and Islamic commentators such as Alexander, Themistius, Simplicius, Avempace, and Avicenna."[14] Such a similarity between the Oxford commentary on the *Physics* and the *De generatione* commentary is an argument for early dating of the latter, even though we know that Burley looked for a trustworthy commentary that he might use as a guide also later in life, when he commented on *Ethics* and *Politics*.[15] Burley's limited erudition in the *De generatione* commentary gives it additional support, since the same property characterizes Oxford *Expositio in libros Physicorum*, too. Unlike the final version of his *Physics* commentary, where Burley cites such philosophers and theologians as Robert Grosseteste, Thomas Aquinas, and Giles of Rome argues against William of Ockham[16] and includes large fragments of his earlier texts,[17] the Oxford version is devoid of such references.

## 3. *Main Themes*

The *De generatione* commentary is a work of a young and relatively inexperienced scholar who only later gained intellectual maturity. Therefore, it should be treated as a document of an early phase in the development of Burley's ideas in the philosophy of nature. When tracing Burley's original ideas in it one has to be careful and patient, since they are immersed in the generally accepted opinions that are taken mostly from Aristotle and Averroes. One could ask, therefore, whether such a work may be a reliable source of information about the opinions of its author. Following J. Jenkins, who distinguishes two model approaches of medieval commentators to the texts they comment upon—the historicist reading, which tries to explain the meaning of the text without any assumption about its truth, and the appropriationist reading, which gives an interpretation that is in agreement with the commentator's own views[18]—E.D. Sylla notices

[14] Ibid., 316.

[15] See J. Dunbabin, "The Reception and Interpretation of Aristotle's *Politics*," in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, 729–30.

[16] See Sylla, "Walter Burley's Practice," 316.

[17] See E.D. Sylla, "Walter Burley's *Physics*' Commentaries and the Mathematics of Alteration," *Early Science and Medicine* 6.3 (2001), 174; and R. Wood, "Walter Burley's *Physics* Commentaries," *Franciscan Studies* 22 (1984), 284–85.

[18] See J. Jenkins, "Expositions of the Text: Aquinas's Aristotelian Commentaries," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 5 (1996), 39–40.

that in Burley's *Physics* commentaries the proportion of appropriationist to historicist reading is growing with each consecutive commentary.[19] Although the *De generatione* commentary does not have its sequel, a sufficient number of issues occur in some of his other works to make the comparison and identification of original ideas possible.

Some of these ideas seem constant but they do not diverge from standard Scholastic opinions. For instance, in the *Expositio vetus* on the *De sex principiis*, which is a work dated from 1302, Burley presents the characteristic of various types of generation, giving his own interpretation to the distinction made by Aristotle.[20] Almost the same characteristic can be found in the *De generatione* commentary.[21] Some other ideas are more original but seem to have little relation to other works. This is especially true about issues such as the distinction between growth and putting up weight,[22] which will be discussed below. Finally, there are some early

[19] See Sylla, "Walter Burley's Practice" (n. 7 above), 318.

[20] See Aristotle, *De generatione et corruptione*, 317b 1–10.

[21] Cf. the following fragments. I would like to thank Mischa von Perger for his kind permission to use his transcript of the *Liber sex principiorum* commentary.

| Burley, *Commentarius in libros De generatione et corruptione*, 231. | Burley, *Commentarius in Librum sex principiorum*, MS Cambridge, Gonville & Caius College, 448/409, fol. 87a–b. |
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| Generatio potest dici "simplex" respective vel absolute. Generatio simplex respective dicta est generatio entis nobilioris respectu generationis entis vilioris, et hoc sive sit in diversis praedicamentis sive in eodem praedicamento, et hoc sive sit in substantia sive in accidentibus. Unde breviter ista generatio dicitur "simplex" respective in qua generatur ens nobilius, et illa dicitur "generatio quaedam" in qua generatur ens vilius. | Et intelligendum est, quod duplex est generatio, scilicet <generatio> simplex et generatio quedam; et utraque dicitur dupliciter: absolute et in respectu. Generatio simplex absoluta est generatio cuiuscumque substantie indifferenter. Generatio quedam absoluta est generatio cuiuscumque accidentis indifferenter. Generatio simplex respectiva <est> quandocumque ex minus nobili fit magis nobile, sive in substantia sive in accidentibu. In substantiis ut si ex terra fiat ignis; in accidentibus ut si ex immusica fiat musica. Generatio quedam respectiva est quandocumque ex magis nobili generatur minus nobile sive in substantiis sive in accidentibus. Et opposito modo est de corruptione. |

[22] See M. Gensler, "Averroes Influence in Walter Burley's Commentary on *De generatione et corruptione*," in *Wissen über Grenzen. Arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter*, ed. A. Speer and L. Wegener, Miscellanea Mediaevalia 33 (Berlin: 2006), 645–46.

signs of what became Burley's signature ideas in his later works, such as the problem of latitude of forms or the first and last instant of change.

A look at the *dubia* and the only question included in his commentary shows that he finds some issues more interesting than others. Their titles are the following: (1) Whether those who accepted one material principle said that generation was alteration; (2) Whether impossibility of substantial change results in impossibility of qualitative change; (3) About the points in a continuum; (4) Whether alteration differs from generation; (5) Whether there is a numerically identical accident at both termini of generation; (6) Whether that which moves rectilinearly changes its place completely; (7) Whether every part of a growing body grows; (8) Whether an animal is nourished as long as it lives; (9) Whether whatever has position has place and vice versa; (10) Whether mathematical objects touch upon one another; (11) Whether mathematical objects have place; (12) Whether whatever makes something moves something but not vice versa; (13) Whether action is due to contrariety and passion, due to similarity; (14) Whether something that is acted upon by something else is subject to action in all its parts; (15) Whether elements remain actually in a composite body (question); and (16) Whether water is principally cold.[23] Some of these questions are quite popular in medieval philosophical literature and appear almost literally in the same form in various commentaries (e.g. Questions 7 and 15);[24] only a few seem to be genuine results of Burley's curiosity. This does not have to mean that Burley's attitude to the issues discussed is schematic; it is Scholastic in the positive sense of the word: he is addressing problems that are believed to be of importance for understanding of the doctrine of change. Considerable differences in

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[23] (1) *An ponentes unum principium materiale habent dicere generationem esse alterationem*; (2) *Utrum ista consequentia sit bona*: *non est possibilis transmutatio secundum substantiam, igitur non est possibilis transmutatio in qualitatibus*; (3) *De punctis in continuo*; (4) *Utrum alteratio differat a generatione*; (5) *An in generatione maneat aliquod idem accidens numero sub utroque terminorum generationis*; (6) *Utrum illud quod movetur localiter motu recto mutet totum locum praecedentem*; (7) *An quaelibet pars aucti sit aucta*; (8) *Utrum animal semper dum vivit nutritur*; (9) *Utrum quibuscumque inest positio insit et locus et e converso*; (10) *An mathematica habeant tactum*; (11) *An mathematica habeant locum*; (12) *Utrum omne faciens sit movens et non e converso*; (13) *Utrum actio sit ratione contrarietatis et passio ratione similitudinis*; (14) *Utrum illud quod patitur per se ab aliquo patiatur secundum quamlibet partem sui*; (15) *Utrum elementa maneant actu in mixto*; (16) *Utrum aqua sit primo frigida.*

[24] Cf. for instance, Aegidius Aurelianensis, *Op. cit.*, I, q. 32 "Utrum quaelibet pars aucti sit aucta" and q. 45 "Utrum miscibilia maneant in mixto"; Nicole Oresme, *Quaestiones super De generatione et corruptione*, ed. S. Caroti (Munich: 1996), I, q. 5 "Utrum formae elementorum maneant in mixto" and q. 14 "Utrum quaelibet pars aucti sit aucta."

length of discussion devoted to the subjects in question may testify to Burley's special interest in particular issues. These issues have been divided here into three parts: elements, and qualitative and quantitative change, which reflect the main foci of interest in *De generatione et corruptione*.

### 3.1. *Elements and Mixtum*

Speaking of elements Burley analyzes three issues: their nature, transmutation of one element into another, and composition of a body (*mixtio*). In his analysis of the nature of an element (i.e. a pure body), we must distinguish between the purity of substance and proper qualities. The purity of a substance can only be destroyed through corruption, which changes one substance into another (e.g. water into air). By contrast, the purity of a proper quality can be destroyed, restored, or altered. This way water can be heated and then cooled down. The process of cooling is dependent on two factors: the nature of water (cold and humid) and the environment. Water cools of itself if it is not prevented by circumstances; it may also be cooled by the surrounding body, even if it is air (naturally hot and humid) when the latter possesses the quality of coldness of a more intense degree.[25] Burley argues here against the opinion of Averroes, who stated that moving itself is possible only in local motion but not in other forms of change and, consequently, coldness can be restored to water not of itself but by adjacent bodies.[26] Unlike accidental forms of quality that can be naturally altered or restored, for elementary (substantial) forms a change means destruction. The conclusion is in agreement with Aristotle's opinion from the *Categories* that substance does not admit of more or less.[27]

The analysis of pure bodies can be seen as an introduction to the discussion of elementary change. Here the successive character of qualitative change is juxtaposed with the total character of substantial generation and

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[25] See Burley, *Commentarius in libros De generatione et corruptione*, 304–06: "In aqua pura est respicere ad duo, scilicet ad substantiam aquae et ad qualitates proprias aquae; et sic potest aqua dici pura dupliciter. Uno modo dicitur aqua pura puritate substantiae, ut quando nihil de substantia aquae aufertur. Alio modo dicitur aqua pura quando propria qualitas aquae manet non permutata; et sic non dicetur aqua pura nisi quando manet summe frigida. Dico tunc quod aqua pura non potest calefieri sic quod manet pura utraque puritate, quia si calefieret, non maneret pura puritate qualitatis, etsi maneat pura puritate substantiae. . . . Secundum hoc est dicendum quod aqua calefacta, si debeat redire ad frigiditatem, oportet quod hoc sit a corpore continente vel ab aere vel a coelo. . . . Aqua frigefacta ex aere circumstante non fit frigidior quam aer circumstans. Propter tamen spissitudinem apparet frigidior."

[26] Cf. Averroes, *In Physicam*, II, com. 1, 48F, VIII, com. 20, 355D, *In de coelo*, IV, 254D.

[27] Cf. Aristotle, *Categoriae*, 5, 3b, 27–28.

corruption. The issue is analyzed from two points of view. With respect to that which undergoes change Burley distinguishes between that which is a patient first and that which is a patient part after part. The former type is wholly acted upon at the same time, which means that any of its parts is subject to change at the same time, just as any part of a portion of water is subject to the action of fire without the mediation of any other part; the latter type is the one that allows for such mediation.[28] Naturally, Burley is aware that if any part may be acted upon at the same time, it does not mean that all parts have to be acted upon at the same time, since parts are subject to action only accidentally.[29] What he wants to stress is that in the former type there is no natural order (i.e. succession of parts of the patient that the agent acts upon or mediation through secondary causes) in contrast to the gradual character of the latter type. The former type characterizes change of substance, the latter, change of qualities. Because generation is always accompanied by alteration, both types of patients are involved in the process.

With respect to the process of elementary change Burley distinguishes between two types: generation of a *mixtum* from its constituent elements and generation of one element from another, called *generatio simplex*. The latter change can be further subdivided into one in which the *generans* produces either something similar to itself (e.g. fire producing new fire), or something dissimilar (e.g. earth producing minerals). These changes are simple in the sense that what is produced has a clear relation to that which produces it, be it similarity or dissimilarity. In the generation of a *mixtum* the product is neither similar to nor dissimilar from the *generans*, because a *mixtum* retains properties of the elements, which means that their forms are neither wholly preserved nor wholly destroyed: the form of

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[28] See Burley, *Commentarius in libros De generatione et corruptione*, 309: "Aliquod est passum primum et aliquod est passum secundum partem, sicut patet: ignis potest agere in aliquam aquam totam simul: potest etiam agere in unam partem absque hoc quod agat in aliam. Dico tunc quod primum passum patitur secundum quamlibet partem eius. Cuius probatio est: nam agens agit in aliquod divisibile, passum igitur est divisibile. Aut igitur quaelibet pars eius patitur, aut aliqua et aliqua non. Si quaelibet pars eius patiatur, habetur propositum quod passum primum patitur secundum quamlibet partem eius. Si patiatur secundum aliquam partem et secundum aliquam non, sit A illa pars secundum quam patitur, et B illa pars secundum quam non patitur. Sicut passum patiatur secundum A et non secundum B, tunc ipsum non patitur nisi quia A patitur; et per consequens ipsum non est primum passum, quia A per prius est passum. Si igitur sit primum passum, oportet quod patiatur secundum quamlibet partem eius, quia aliter non esset primum passum, sed solum passum secundum partem."

[29] See ibid., 310: "Pars non patitur nisi per accidens ex hoc quod totum patitur per se. Modo non oportet quod quodlibet passum habeat movens immediatum, sed hoc solum est intelligendum de passo per se."

a *mixtum* is an intermediary form containing the elementary forms not in their proper acts but *in virtute*.[30] The properties of the elements retained in a *mixtum* are the same as those of pure elements but are remiss because of concurrence of opposing properties (i.e. heat is kept in check by coldness and humidity, by dryness). This way, the *qualitas mixta* is an intermediary between the extreme qualities of elements. Unlike other intermediary forms a *mixtum* is more perfect than the elements, as it possesses the powers (*virtutes*) of all elements. It is because of those powers only that the elements are said to remain in a *mixtum*, not because of their substance or qualities, which are altered in its production.[31] Contrary to the process of growth, where there is corruption (of the nutrient) without generation (of a new body), the generation of a *mixtum* lacks a corresponding corruption, since the elements are not wholly destroyed.

### 3.2. *Qualitative Change*

The transmutation of elements is possible because opposite elementary qualities that make them up act as agents and patients, respectively.

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[30] See ibid., 322: "Mixtio enim differt a generatione simplici, scilicet a generatione unius elementi ex alio. Nam in aliis generationibus simplicibus generans vel producit sibi simile simpliciter, ut si sit generans univocum, vel dissimile simpliciter, ut si sit generans aequivocum. Sed in generatione mixti ex elementis non generatur aliquid simile simpliciter, nec dissimile simpliciter, sed generatur aliquid quod est aliquo modo simile elementis. Et ideo nec totaliter corrumpuntur elementa, nec totaliter manent, sed manent in effectu communi illis. Mixtum enim generatur ex elementis adaequatis in potentiis. Quando igitur nullum elementum ad plenum dominatur alteri, ita quod inducat dispositiones omnino convenientes suae formae, sed sunt in quadam dispositione media quae non est ad plenum proportionata formae alicuius elementi, et ista forma media continet formas elementorum in virtute."

[31] Ibid., 322–23: "Sicut corporis simplicis est aliqua qualitas simplex, ita proportionaliter corporis mixti debet esse qualitas mixta. Unde caliditas, quae est in corpore mixto, non est caliditas simplex, sed est caliditas remissa. Remissa autem non est nisi per frigiditatem, et ita in mixto manet calidum ut frigidum et frigidum ut calidum, et ita remanet ibi quaedam qualitas media quae ita se habet ad corpus mixtum sicut qualitas simplex ad corpus simplex. Et ita, sicut illa qualitas media continet qualitates extremas in virtute, sic forma mixti continet formas elementorum in virtute. Et illa qualitas media sic continet qualitates extremas quod non continet sub actualitatibus propriis; et ideo forma mixti continet formas elementorum non sub actualitatibus propriis. In hoc tamen est differentia inter compositionem mixti ex elementis et medii ex extremis, quod . . . mixtum est perfectius elementis. . . . Cum dicitur quod elementa manent in mixto in virtute, . . . dicitur quod elementa manent in mixto in virtute propter hoc quod mixtum habet consimilem virtutem virtutibus elementorum; nam a qualitatibus mixtis possunt procedere consimiles operationes, quales procedunt a qualitatibus elementorum. . . . Ideo dicitur quod elementa manent in mixto in virtute, quia mixtum habet virtutes consimiles virtutibus omnium quattuor elementorum, non quia substantiae elementorum manent in mixto nec etiam qualitates elementorum, sed quia virtutes consimiles."

Burley distinguishes between three types of agents. End (*finis*) is metaphorically called agent but it does not have to act by means of contrariety. Nor is contrariety needed for the action of a proper agent (i.e. an efficient), which does not communicate with matter in the patient. It is only an agent that acts through communicating with matter in the patient that requires contrariety for its action. This is the contrariety of form, which acts through being different from other forms of its kind. Such contrariety, however, requires double similarity: first the similarity in form (i.e. common genus), second, the similarity in substrate (i.e. common matter). In an action of this type, both contrary form and matter function as patients for the agent.[32] Burley notes here that not all genera are divided into species that are contrary: it happens with some qualities (e.g. hotness and coldness), but not with species of animate substances (e.g. man and ass).

Alteration is a process in which a quality may be changed part after part. This is only possible in qualities that can admit grades, which are sort of parts of a form. Aristotle believes that grades can be found in all kinds of qualities, whether or not they have opposites, and stresses that gradation of qualities can only take place in a subject.[33] Burley speaks of grades of qualitative form in such changes, in which the extremes are opposite species of the same genus, in such a way that one can be treated as privation of the other (but not in all genera of qualities). Changes of this kind can be found, for example, in heating and cooling. Heat and cold can be more or less intensive on the scale that ranges from the greatest hotness to the greatest coldness or, alternatively, from the smallest coldness to the smallest hotness. In such a situation a given qualitative form can be described by the grade of intensity of one or the other of opposite qualities.[34] This means that for Burley only a qualitative change between

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[32] See ibid., 303–04: "Agens metaphorice dictum est illud cuius gratia efficiens agit; unde finis dicitur agens metaphorice. Adhuc loquendo de agente proprie dicto est agens duplex: quoddam est agens communicans in materia cum passo et quoddam est agens non communicans in materia cum passo. Loquendo de metaphorice dicto, non oportet quod tale agens agat ratione contrarietatis; non oportet enim quod finis contrarietur efficienti. Similiter loquendo de agente quod non communicat in materia cum passo, non oportet quod tale agens agat ratione contrarietatis. Sed loquendo tertio modo, scilicet de agente proprie dicto quod communicat in materia cum passo, sic oportet quod actio fiat ratione contrarietatis et passio ratione similitudinis. Cuius ratio est quia tale agens habet formam contrariam formae patientis. Sed actio est ratione formae, passio ratione materiae. Cum igitur tale agens et patiens contrarientur ratione formarum et conveniant in materia, sequitur quod actio est ratione contrarietatis et passio ratione convenientiae."

[33] See Aristotle, *Categoriae* 8, 10b, 29–33.

[34] See Burley, *Commentarius in libros De generatione et corruptione*, 306: "Omnia quae sunt sub eodem genere diviso in duo contraria activa et passiva ad invicem, si sint diversa

extremes is a qualitative change in the strict sense, where it is the quality and not the subject, which admits of grades of "more" and "less". Thus he introduces a distinction between an intensive and extensive degree. For instance, a leaf can be said to be greener, when a greater part of its surface is green (extensively), or when its green hue is stronger than that of other leaves (intensively); the former description does not refer to degree of quality but to place.

A special problem concerning change is whether an accident may remain the same throughout the process of generation. This is an issue that is interesting for theologians analyzing the transubstantiation of the Eucharist, where accidents remain the same even though the substance is miraculously changed.[35] In the *De generatione* commentary, Burley discusses the question briefly without any reference to the theological aspect of the problem. He argues that the same accident may remain at both termini of generation invoking the authority of both Averroes and Avicenna, who point to instances in which the same accident characterizes both the substance that is corrupted and the one that is generated. Following Avicenna Burley presents a distinction concerning accidents of the composite. Accidents may be related to matter, form, or the whole composite. Accidents related to matter may remain throughout the process of generation, because matter, as the substrate of the process, is not changed. Accidents related to form may remain throughout the process of generation only when they are related to generic form, since the ones that are related to specific form perish together with it in the process. Accidents related to the whole composite may not remain for the same reasons: individuals of the same species cannot be immediately transformed into one another.[36] Averroes's example with transparency remaining the same

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specie, sunt activa et passiva ad invicem. Unde non quaecumque contenta sub quocumque genere sunt activa et passiva, sed contenta solum sub genere diviso in contraria quae sunt activa et passiva ad invicem. Unde calidum et frigidum continentur sub uno genere diviso in contraria quae sunt activa et passiva; et ideo calidum et frigidum sunt activa et passiva ad invicem. Sed sic non est de homine et asino."

[35] See J.E. Murdoch and E.D. Sylla, "The Science of Motion," in *Science in the Middle Ages*, ed. D.C. Lindberg (Chicago: 1978), 221.

[36] See Burley, *Commentarius in libros De generatione et corruptione*, 239–40: "De accidentibus quae insunt composito ratione materiae, dico quod talia accidentia possunt manere eadem numero sub utroque termino generationis: sicut enim eadem materia numero manet sub utroque termino generationis, sic et accidentia quae consequuntur materiam. . . . De accidentibus quae consequuntur compositum ratione formae dico quod talia sunt multiplicata, nam quaedam consequuntur ratione formae generalis et quaedam ratione formae specialis. . . . Loquendo de forma quae inest ratione formae specialis, dico quod tale accidens non potest manere idem numero sub utroque termino generationis et

in the change from air to water served him to distinguish between something that undergoes change in a substrate and something that does not: transparency is an accident unrelated to the changing form;[37] Burley takes it over and uses it to exemplify the distinction borrowed from Avicenna. The example shows that although he speaks of accidents, he has qualities in mind; elsewhere, he denies that quantity can remain the same in substantial change.

### 3.3. *Quantitative Change*

Growth (*augmentatio*), which is a quantitative change, is a process different from substantial or qualitative change, even though as a natural process it is always accompanied by them. It is a change which produces no new substance but increases the quantity of existing substance. As a result, it has to be analyzed as a process which involves three sides: the form and matter of the growing body and the matter of the destroyed body of the nutrient. Growth is connected with nutrition, understood as transferring the matter of the nutrient into the body of an animal in such a way that the form of the animal is extended onto the matter of the nutrient after the destruction of its form. Growth can mean several things. When it is said that an animal grows, it may mean the growth of its body parts, such as limbs, or tissues, such as muscles and bones, or both. It may also mean that an animal as a whole is occupying more and more space. Considering the growth of limbs and tissues Burley notes the difference between the two types of parts. The former have a heterogeneous nature, since they are composed of various tissues; the latter are homogenous, for every part of a muscle is a muscle down to the *minimum naturale* (i.e. the minimal portion of a body that can still preserve its nature). Because limbs are made of tissues, the latter are called material parts of a body, while the former are called formal parts. The growth of formal parts is

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hoc, quia eadem forma specifica non potest manere sub utroque terminorum generationis, nam individua eiusdem speciei non sunt ad invicem transmutabilia. . . . Si loquamur de accidentibus quae insunt ratione formae generalis, sic dico quod sicut eadem forma generalis potest manere in generato et in corrupto, sic idem accidens numero consequens illam formam generalem potest manere in generato et in corrupto. . . . Loquendo de accidentibus quae consequuntur compositum ratione materiae et ratione formae, sic impossibile est quod idem accidens numero sit sub utroque termino generationis, sicut impossibile est quod eadem materia et eadem forma maneant idem numero sub utroque termino generationis."

[37] See Averroes, *Commentarium medium in Aristotelis De generatione et corruptione*, 35, 20–36, 45.

easy to observe; the less manifest growth of material parts causes some controversy. According to Averroes material parts grow in such a way that new portions of them are generated to fill in the pores in the body, which are result of its rarefaction. Burley objects against this view. He claims that it is against the opinion of Aristotle that every part of a growing thing grows, and limits growth to formal parts only.[38] Now if there is any growth of formal parts, it is directly a result of growth of material ones.[39]

Seen from the perspective of form of the growing body, growth is an extension of that form onto a new matter, which comes from food. A substantial form is able to inform more or less matter without undergoing any change itself, though there are natural limits on how little and how much it needs in every species, lest it dies. What is changed in the process is the accidental form of quantity. Unlike quality, that form does not allow for any latitude so in every moment of growth a body takes a new form of quantity. In explaining the process, Burley borrows an example from Averroes: a substantial form of a body is like a leather sack filled with water—its substance does not change while its quantity varies. No new part is being produced and all existing parts grow.[40]

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[38] See Burley, *Commentarius in libros De generatione et corruptione*, 255–56: "Quando cibus est in stomacho, facta alimentali digestione illud quod est aliqualiter purum, resudat per poros a stomacho et postea defertur ad epar, in quo iterum digeritur. . . . Et in membris sunt parvi pori in quibus recipiuntur partes alimenti, et appellatur a Commentatore 'humiditas cibalis'. Et ista humiditas cibalis, ut vult Commentator, per calorem naturalem coagulatur in partes carnosas et osseas applicabiles prioribus. Et facta ista conversione, per virtutem extensivam extenditur membrum et rarefit; et secundum quod rarefit fiunt novi pori et implentur humiditate cibali. Et iterum humiditas quae est in poris in carne, convertitur in partes carnosas, et quae in osse, convertitur in partes osseas. Et iterum fit extensio et novi pori cum extensione, et implentur cum humiditate cibali. Et per istum modum fit augmentatio. . . . Et ista opinio ponit quod in poris generatur nova caro et post generationem illius carnis fit extensio, et illa extensio est augmentatio. Contra: secundum istam viam videtur quod non quaelibet pars aucti est aucta, quia pars de novo generata non est aucta; similiter pars quae praefuit, non est aucta, quia forma sua non est in pluri materia quam praefuit; nec compositum ex parte de novo generata et ex parte antiqua est auctum, quia illud compositum non praefuit. Et ideo nulla pars aucti est aucta."

[39] See ibid., 253–54: "Dicitur quod partes secundum formam augentur et partes secundum materiam non. Et dicitur quod pars secundum formam est pars instrumentalis, ut manus vel digitus. Tales enim partes manent eodem numero a principio usque in finem, et tales partes augentur. Partes secundum materiam sunt partes omoeomeriae, ut caro vel os, et tales partes non manent, sed continue fluunt et refluunt. Unde partes secundum materiam non augentur, sed partes secundum formam augentur. . . . Contra: Philosophus dicit quod partes anomoeomeriae augentur per hoc quod partes omoeomeriae augentur, ut manus et pes augentur per hoc quod caro et os augentur."

[40] See ibid., 257–58: "Forma continet materiam et materia continetur a forma. Et ideo imaginandum est de forma sicut de continente et de materia sicut de contento. Imaginandum est igitur quod forma se habet in augmentatione, sicut se habet uter corii, quando

When Burley says that no new substance is being produced through growth, he has in mind the whole composite entailing the substantial form and matter. Matter is not something that can preserve its accidental quantity while its substantial form is destroyed and such quantity cannot migrate from one subject to another,[41] so the process of growth cannot be seen as adding new portions of matter; such a process would be growth by name only, for neither the old nor the new parts would grow. Accordingly, growth can refer only to quantitative parts of a being, ones that are extended and divisible, like limbs and tissues, but not to qualitative ones that are not divisible of themselves, like matter and form.[42] Matter coming from food is not, therefore, added to the matter of the body in an arithmetical way (otherwise the body would be an aggregate), but is incorporated by the organism allowing it to keep its life and functions.[43]

Inasmuch as growth requires prior destruction of food, it is accompanied by two other types of change: substantial and qualitative. These three processes follow one another in a strict order: first, there is a qualitative change of food, occurring while it is eaten and digested; its qualities are changed before the substantial form is destroyed. Only after the matter is taken over by the substantial form of the body can growth start. The

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primo impletur pauca aqua et postea infunditur plus de aqua. Tunc uter corii extendit se magis quam prius, et uter corii manet idem, quando continet paucam aquam et quando multam; sed aqua non manet eadem. Et sic in augmentatione eadem forma quae praefuit, extendit se in pluri materia. Unde sicut uter corii non habet aliquam partem quam prius non habuit, ex hoc quod continet plus de aqua quam prius, sic forma aucti non habet aliquam partem quam prius non habuit, ex hoc quod extenditur in pluri materia."

[41] See ibid., 260–62: "Si isto modo fieret augmentatio per extensionem formae in pluri materia, cum quaelibet pars aucti sit aucta, . . . quaelibet pars formae fieret in alia parte materiae quam prius. Et per consequens nulla pars materiae quae praefuit ante augmentationem, informaretur aliqua parte formae illius aucti in fine augmentationis, et per consequens forma aucti secundum se totam et secundum quamlibet partem sui fieret in nova materia; et sic in aucto non maneret aliqua materia in fine augmentationis, quae praefuit in principio. Item, . . . sequitur quod aliqua quantitas est modo in aliqua parte aucti tamquam in subiecto adaequato et quod eadem quantitas erit postea in alia parte tamquam in subiecto adaequato, utraque illarum partium manente, et ita accidens migraret a subiecto in subiectum, utroque illorum subiectorum manente."

[42] See ibid., 262–63: "Partes aucti sunt duplices: quaedam sunt partes qualitativae et quaedam sunt partes quantitativae. Partes qualitativae sunt materia et forma; partes quantitativae sunt partes integrales, quae insunt composito ex materia et forma, ut caro et os. Dicendum igitur quod quaelibet pars quantitativa aucti est aucta, sed non quaelibet qualitativa, quia nec materia nec forma augetur."

[43] See ibid., 252: "Pars secundum formam est illa quae separata a toto potest in operationem totius, ut illa pars quae potest convertere alimentum in sui naturam dicitur esse pars secundum formam; et illa pars dicitur esse pars secundum materiam quae non potest convertere alimentum in sui naturam."

"asymmetrical" character of growth is the result of the fact that from one side it can be seen as similar to generation: it is a change whose substrate is prime matter, freed from its earlier substantial form; from another side, however, it is similar to alteration, since no new being is produced in it.[44] Burley's observation is in agreement with Averroes, in his comparison of the processes of *mixtio*, growth, generation and corruption, and alteration.[45]

Burley noticed that nutrition was involved not only in the process of growth of young organisms towards the perfection of their natures but also in putting up weight by organisms at various stages of physical development. Explaining the process of putting up weight (*pinguescere*) Burley revisits the previously discarded idea of Averroes. When an animal puts up weight, it does, indeed, produce a new body. Naturally, it is not a new substantial form, but a new material part of the body, that is, a new portion of tissue,[46] which is somehow in excess of what is necessary for the well-being of an organism. Both processes are consequences of nutrition, which is determined by the specific form of a given animal.[47] The process of nutrition is caused by the vegetative part of soul, which is acting of necessity.[48] Since living organisms have their shapes and sizes regulated

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[44] See ibid., 243: "Dicit Commentator, quod idem est ex quo est augmentatio et ex quo est generatio. Nam generatio est in toto et augmentatio est in parte, et quia generatio est ex materia prima, ideo et augmentatio. Et ideo illae quaestiones quae sunt de illo ex quo est augmentatio, sunt de materia prima."

[45] Cf. Averroes, *Commentarium medium in Aristotelis De generatione et corruptione*, 87, 54–57.

[46] See Burley, *Commentarius in libros De generatione et corruptione*, 268–69: "Quandoque bene contingit quod per alimentum adveniens generatur nova caro, sed per generationem novae carnis non fit augmentatio. Verbi gratia, senes quando fiunt pingues, non augmentantur. Si tamen forma praeexistens fieret in pluri materia quam prius, senes augmentarentur, quando fiunt pinguiores."

[47] See ibid., 272: "Causa autem tam augmenti quam nutrimenti est species, id est priora illius quod augetur. Quando enim forma plus convertit quam deperditur, tunc est augmentatio, sed quando convertit tantum quantum deperditur, tunc est nutritio et non augmentatio. Vel si generetur plus quam deperditur, et tamen forma aucti non potest aliquid convertere, tunc deficit animal—sicut, quando aqua miscetur cum vino, quanto plus de aqua miscetur cum vino, tanto vinum est impurius et minus de aqua potest convertere in vinum; et ultimo, cum tantum ponatur de aqua, quod vinum non potest amplius convertere, tunc vinum fit totaliter aquosum et impurum, et corrumpitur."

[48] See ibid., 273: "Causa effectiva nutritionis est anima vegetativa per calorem naturalem. Sed anima vegetativa naturaliter agit. Operationes enim animae vegetativae non subduntur rationi, nec sunt in potestate nostra. Sed calor naturalis est natus agere in humidum radicale. Nam calor naturalis semper agit in humidum radicale consumendo ipsum. Cum igitur calor naturalis et humidum radicale semper, dum animal vivit, sunt approximata ad invicem, patet quod effectum in nutritione est semper approximatum passo, et ita est semper actio."

by nature (they are not determined by it, as there are concurrent causes beside nature), there are also natural needs regarding quantity and quality of food at every stage of life of an individual. Consequently, only a required amount of food is used to satisfy these natural needs, and any excess food is converted into a "new" body (we would say "fat"). Sufficient food allows a mature animal to preserve its life in its perfection; if an animal has not reached its perfection yet, it uses the food for growth. If the food is insufficient, an animal's heat starts digesting its own humidity, which causes shrinking of the body and may bring about death, when the radical humidity (*humidum radicale*) of an animal is altogether destroyed.[49] If it is superfluous, an animal is able not only to sustain its form (regardless of the stage of its development), but it puts on weight.

Both putting up weight and growth produce a secondary change in the extension of a body, which occupies larger space as a result of each. Unlike the other two processes, change in extension is continuous, for space is infinitely divisible, while bodies are composed of *minima naturalia*. The spatial extension of organisms, accompanying growth and putting up weight, is an accidental change, which should not be mistaken for either of the two, as it involves another category (i.e. position). Burley's insistence on the separation of changes in different categories leads him to the opinion that one has to distinguish between "more or less" and "larger or smaller" and, consequently, two different types of equality.[50] Since growth is a change in the category of quantity, "larger or smaller", which describes changes in the category of *ubi*, cannot be its direct result. If "more or less" is to be attributed to something in the category of quantity, it has to refer to a property that is directly linked with it. This is density and rarity of the body. A body becomes "more" if its density rises while spatial extension remains the same. Still, an increase in density accompanied with shrinking of a body and an increase in rarity accompanied with swelling of a

[49] See ibid.: "Quando alimentum est praesens, calor naturalis agit in alimentum; et ex hoc quod agit in alimentum, minus agit in humidum radicale, et sic conservatur humidum radicale per sumptionem alimenti; sed quando alimentum non est praesens, tunc calor plus consumit de humido radicali. Et per tantum tempus potest alimentum abesse, quod calor naturalis totaliter consumit humidum; et quia vita animalis consistit in humido et calido, ideo deficiente humido radicali statim corrumpitur animal."

[50] See Burley, *In Physicam Aristotelis expositio et quaestiones* (Venice: 1501; repr. Hildesheim: 1972), fol. 196rb: "Equalitas duplex est, videlicet quantitativa et qualitativa. Equalitas quantitativa est equalitas secundum quantitatem, sed equalitas qualitativa est equalitas in gradu forme. Due enim albedines in eodem gradu, seu eque intense, quarum una extenditur in magno corpore et alia in parvo corpore, sunt equales qualitative sed non sunt equales quantitative, quia una extenditur in maiori corpore quam alia."

body is not growth for Burley.[51] This recourse to the concept of size shows that he was unable to complete a radical separation of growth and spatial change.

## 4. *Conclusions*

Many of Burley's ideas in the *De generatione et corruptione* commentary are not original. An example of this is his opinion on the status of elements *in mixtione* and the *qualitas mixta* of a composite body, which agrees with Thomas Aquinas, who claimed that elementary forms exist virtually in composite bodies.[52] Some of the ideas presented in the *De generatione et corruptione* commentary can be found in Burley's other works. Whether every part of a growing body grows is a problem that seems to have captivated his mind for quite a long time, not just in the *De generatione et corruptione*.[53] With respect to Burley's signature ideas concerning accidental change, of which the latitude of forms is one, we do not see much more of them in the *De generatione* commentary than the remarks about intensity of a quality. The discussions concerning alteration involved in the process of nutrition briefly touch upon the problem of the last instant of alteration stating that there is no first and last instant of change.[54] That issue is

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[51] According to Burley *extensio* is a change in the category of *ubi*, like local motion, and thus is only accidentally connected with growth (*augmentatio*), since one can easily imagine a growth without extension, viz. a growth in density. Extension differs from local motion, because the extended body occupies a new place without leaving the old one. Consequently, rarefaction, which is an extension without adding any new matter, is not a growth for him. See Burley, *Commentarius in libros De generatione et corruptione*, 256: "Augmentatio est ipsa extensio quae est post conversionem alimenti; ideo potest sustineri quod pars de novo generata est aucta, et etiam illa pars quae praefuit, quia utraque extenditur. Contra: Si isto modo fieret augmentatio, non differret augmentatio a rarefactione. Nam rarefactio est, quando est maior extensio nullo adveniente, et sic est in proposito. Nam pars de novo generata extenditur, et nihil sibi advenit; igitur si illa extensio esset augmentatio, augmentatio non differret a rarefactione."

[52] Cf. Thomas de Aquino, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 76, a. 4.

[53] See Burley, *Tractatus secundus*, "Ad rationes naturales": 11, and *In Physicam Aristotelis expositio et quaestiones*, fol. 58ra.

[54] See Burley, *Commentarius in libros De generatione et corruptione*, 264–65: "Antequam forma aucti inducatur in materiam alimenti, oportet alimentum alterari; oportet enim quod alteratio praecedat corruptionem alimenti. Et illa alteratio mensuratur tempore. Volo tunc quod A significet ultimum instans temporis mensurantis alterationem praecedentem totam corruptionem alimenti. Quaero tunc: Aut in A aliqua pars alimenti corrumpitur aut nulla. Si aliqua pars alimenti corrumpatur, oportet quod nulla pars eius prius fuit corrupta, quia aliter A non esset ultimum instans temporis mensurantis alterationem praecedentem totam corruptionem alimenti. Illa igitur pars alimenti quae erit corrupta in A, erit corrupta simul tota, et per consequens aliqua pars formae ipsius aucti est inducta

discussed at length in *De primo et ultimo instanti*, where Burley analyzes many forms of change.[55] The final part of the commentary on *Liber sex principiorum* is a natural place to look for parallels with *De generatione* as it covers the same source text. It is here that one can discover the description of *generatio simplex* that develops the distinction presented in the *De generatione* commentary.[56]

Burley demonstrates his skill as a philosopher in the analysis of growth. Speaking of it in his *De generatione* Aristotle barely touched the problem of distinction between spatial and quantitative change and said almost nothing about the processes involving nutrition;[57] Averroes gave a slightly more detailed explanation of the latter issue.[58] Burley presented a new solution. In his analysis of growth, one can see the influence of Averroes. Still, he is able to reject his authority when he believes he is wrong. This shows that even though he is not yet a mature thinker, he is independent and intelligent enough to test his own solutions.

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tota simul in materiam ipsius partis alimenti. Nec est dare quod in A nulla pars alimenti est corrupta, quia sic oporteret quamlibet partem ipsius alimenti adhuc alterari antequam corrumperetur, et sic A non foret ultimum instans alterationis praecedentis."

[55] See H. and Ch. Shapiro (eds.), "*De primo et ultimo instanti* des Walter Burley," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 47 (1965), 170: "Dico quod est dare ultimum instans in quo ubi signatum est in subiecto. Quia in primo instanti ipsius mensurantis motum localem ab hoc ubi habet esse, et numquam postea habebit esse, nec secundum se nec secundum aliquam eius partem. Quia si postea maneret hoc ubi vel aliqua eius pars, sequitur quod aliquid moveretur et remaneret in eodem ubi in quo prius erat—quod est impossibile."

[56] See note 22 above.

[57] Cf. Aristoteles, *De generatione et corruptione*, 321a–322a.

[58] Cf. Averroes, *Commentarium medium in Aristotelis De generatione et corruptione*, 44–56.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

# THE ETHICS OF WALTER BURLEY

Iacopo Costa

If one wishes to understand Walter Burley's moral philosophy, the main text to consider is his commentary on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Were his commentary on the *Sentences* not lost, the matter of the present inquiry would be vastly increased. I will examine what Burley has to say about the topics that have been recognized by the exegetical tradition as the most significant in the *Ethics*; however, it will be impossible to study every single aspect of Burley's *Ethics* commentary.[1]

## *Composition and Structure of the* Ethics *Commentary*

Burley's commentary on the *Ethics* is preserved in 26 manuscripts. Some of these manuscripts give the complete text, some are incomplete, some give only the "conclusiones" or the "notabilia" of the commentary. This rich manuscript tradition is completed by four ancient editions (Venice 1481, 1500, 1519, 1521).[2] The *Ethics* commentary must have been written

[1] There are only a small number of studies on Burley's commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*. See: R. Saarinen, "Walter Burley on *akrasia*: Second Thoughts," *Vivarium* 37 (1999), 60–71 (the problem of Burley's conception of *incontinentia* will not be considered in the present study); R. Wood, "Willing Wickedly: Ockham and Burley Compared," *Vivarium* 37 (1999), 72–93; see also R. Saarinen, *Weakness of the Will in Medieval Thought. From Augustine to Buridan* (Leiden: 1994); and B. Sère, *Penser l'amitié au Moyen Âge* (Turnhout: 2007). I have not had access to the doctoral dissertation by G.J. Gomes, "Foundation of Ethics in Walter Burleigh's Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics" (Columbia University: 1973).

[2] Ch. Lohr, "Medieval Aristotle Latin commentaries," *Traditio* 24 (1968), 185–86; D.A. Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics in the Italian Renaissance* (*ca. 1300–1650*). *The Universities and the Problem of Moral Education* (Leiden: 2002), 469. In this study I will quote Burley's commentary from the Venice edition of 1481: "Gualteri Burlei doctoris egregii super decem libros Ethicorum expositiones expliciunt. Venetiis per Octavianum Scotum Modoetiensem. Anno salutis M°cccclxxxi. Sexto idus Maii Joanne Mocenigo Inclyto Venetiarum Duce" (hereafter V—fols. are not numbered); I have compared the text of this edition with the only manuscript I had access to: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 6459 (hereafter P). I will use three roman numbers for the internal division of Burley's commentary, for example: *In Eth. Nic.* II.1.1 means Book II, *tractatus* 1, Chapter 1.

between 1333 and 1341: it is indeed dedicated to the bishop of Durham Richard Bury, who was bishop between 1333 and 1345.[3]

In the prologue, Burley states that, in its actual form, his commentary on Books I–VI of the *Ethics* is the revised and shortened version of an earlier and longer version which he had written in the preceding years; on the contrary, the commentary on Books VII–X is original.[4]

Then Burley illustrates the method that he will adopt in exposing Aristotle's text, and the structure of the commentary. The structure is quite complex, but extremely well ordered: each book is divided in *tractatus*, each *tractatus* in *capitula*, each *capitulum* in *partes*, each *pars* in *particule*; each book is preceded by a short introduction, where Burley points out the main problems (*questiones*) treated by Aristotle in the book; at the end of each book, Burley lists the most important statements (*propositiones notabiliores*) of the book, and sums up its *conclusiones*.[5] Moreover, Burley divides the Aristotelian discourse into three kinds (*partes*): some parts are *inquisitive*, some are *narrative*, and some are *declarative*: according to Burley, Aristotle has expressed his own thought only in the *narrative* and *declarative* parts, while in *inquisitive* parts he has simply examined the

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[3] *In Eth. Nic., prologus* (V fol. 1ra; P fol. 1ra): "Reverendo in Christo patri et domino, domino Richardo divina disponente clementia episcopo Dunelmensi (episcopo Dunelmensi P Ulmensis sedis episcopo V), Gualterus de Burleo sacre pagine inter ceteros floride universitatis (Parisius *add.* P) doctores minimus professor, humili vestre dominationis servitor in via salutem et gratiam et in termino gloriam sempiternam." On the dating of the work see above, Chapter One, 17–47, n. 163.

[4] Ibid.: "Ne tamen negligentie torporive ascribat vestra prudentia quod formidat imperitia et erubescentia nititur inclinare, scripsi pavidus super libro *Ethicorum* que senili memorie nunc occurrunt aliqua (alia P) que particulariter prius scripseram compendiosius recensendo. Inde quia super sex primos libros *Ethicorum* diffusius alias memini me scripsisse, tunc completo opere super quattuor ultimis libris revertor ad scribendum super sex alios libros modo breviori observando eundem modum in omnibus dictis libris." The second part of the quoted passage ("Inde quia super sex . . .") is missing in V; however, it is included in the edition of 1521, as it is possible to infer from G. Heidingsfelder, *Albert von Sachsen. Sein Lebensgang und sein Kommentar zur Nikomachischen Ethik des Aristoteles*, (Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters) 22.3–4 (Münster: 1921), 89.

[5] Ibid.: "Intendo autem in hoc opere (Intendo . . . opere: Et intendo P) in principio cuiuslibet libri ponere questiones principales motas et determinatas in illo libro, et in fine cuiuslibet libri ponam propositiones notabiliores libri que communis locum habent in conversatione hominum et convictu, et post propositiones notabiles ponam conclusiones ut per hec homo possit facilius (*inv.* P) intentionem totius libri memorie (memoriter P) retinere. In exponendo vero (totum P) textum dividam quemlibet librum in tractatus, et tractatus in capitula, et capitula in partes, et partes in particulas, faciendo illas divisiones secundum diversitatem sententie et non secundum quantitatem littere quemadmodum plurimi diviserunt."

positions of other philosophers.[6] As Kuksewicz and Saarinen have rightly pointed out in their studies,[7] Burley often reads the text of Aristotle with the eyes of a historian: such a division of the text on the basis of Aristotle's intention confirms that Burley looks at Aristotle as a historian of philosophy, aiming to restore the true philosophical meaning of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. In addition to the *expositio littere*, Burley's commentary includes a great number of *dubia, questiones, notanda*, and so on. The size of the *dubia* and of the *questiones* is variable: some *dubia* are brief questions and answers, while some *questiones* are quite extended. A considerable part of the *notanda* consists in the exposition of the opinions of other commentators to the *Ethics* ("Notandum secundum Eustratium . . ."; "Notandum secundum Albertum . . ."; "Notandum secundum Lincolniensem . . ." etc.).

Burley's commentary on the *Ethics* has been quite widely read, as testified both by the relatively great number of surviving manuscripts and ancient editions, and by the fact that it seems to have been used and quoted until the 16th century.[8] This success is probably due to the extreme clearness of Burley's *expositio*.

## *Burley's Sources in the* Ethics *Commentary*

Here are the sources explicitly quoted by Burley in his commentary on the *Ethics*.

Albert the Great:

A total of 33 quotations with no reference; these quotations are mostly taken from Albert's first commentary on the *Ethics* (i.e. the *lectura*—edited under the name of *Super ethica*). For instance, *In Eth. Nic.* 1.1.1: "Albertus

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[6] Ibid. (V fol. 1ra–rb; P fol. 1ra): "Et quia Philosophus quandoque procedit dubitando, quandoque narrando et (*om.* P) quandoque declarando, distinguam capitula ubi opus fuerit (est P) in partem inquisitivam, narrativam et declarativam, et per hoc poterit (ut per hoc possit P) sciri quod dictum Aristotelis debeat (debet P) allegari aut recipi tanquam certum. Non enim quodlibet dictum Aristotelis in libris suis est autenticum: que enim dicuntur in dubitationibus (in dubitationibus dicuntur P) non dicuntur semper ex intentione, sed (unde P) quod dicitur in parte declarativa aut narrativa, aliorum dicta non recitando, (aliorum . . . recitando *om.* P) tamquam autenticum est tenendum."

[7] Saarinen, "Walter Burley," and Z. Kuksewicz, "The Problem of Walter Burley's Averroism," in *Studi sul XIV secolo in memoria di Anneliese Maier*, ed. A. Maierù and A. Paravicini Bagliani (Rome: 1981), 341–77.

[8] Aristote, *L'Éthique à Nicomaque*, ed. and trans. R.A. Gauthier and J.Y. Jolif, 4 vols. (Louvain la Neuve: 2002), 1, 136ff. On Burley's influence on Albert of Saxony, see Georg Heidingsfelder, *Albert von Sachsen*, 86–94.

assignat aliam rationem dicens quod in istis quattuor que hic ponuntur (*scil.* ars, doctrina, actus, electio) sufficienter continentur ea que cadunt sub consideratione illius scientie";[9] cf. Albert, *Super Ethica* 1.1: "Dicendum quod in istis quattuor quae ponit, sufficienter continentur ea quae cadunt in hac scientia . . ."[10]

Al Farabi (? quoted as *Commentator*):
*In II Rhet.*: one quotation.

Aristotle (and ps.-Aristotle):
*Cat.*: four quotations; *An. post.*: six quotations; *Top.*: three quotations; *Phys.*: 24 quotations; *De caelo*: three quotations (all from Book I); *De an.*: 15 quotations (13 from Book III, two from Book II); *De mem.*: one quotation; *De sensu*: one quotation; *De somno*: two quotations; *De gen. animalium*: one quotation; *Metaph.*: 13 quotations; *Pol.*: nine quotations; *Rhet.*: seven quotations; *Phision.*: one quotation; *Magna Moralia*: one quotation.

Avicenna:
*Lib. VI nat.*: four quotations.

Averroes:
*In Phys.*: four quotations;
*In III De an.*: two quotations (all from Book III).

Augustinus:
One quotation without reference: *In Eth. Nic.* 9.2.2: "Unde batus Augustinus dicit quod lumen non est factum in medio sed continue fit in medio."[11]

Boethius:
*De consol.*: two quotations.

Cicero:
*De amicitia*: one quotation;
*De inv.*: one quotation;
*Tusc. disp.*: one quotation;
two quotations without reference.

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[9] V fol. 2vb; P fol. 1va.
[10] Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 1.1, ed. W. Kübel in *S. Alberti Magni . . . Opera Omnia*, vol. XIV/I (Münster in Westfalen: 1968), 6, lines 24ff. (I have modified the punctuation).
[11] V fol. 205rb; P fol. 142rb.

Eustratius of Nicea and the Greek commentators (always quoted as *Eustratius* by Walter Burley):
*In Eth. Nic.*: 213 quotations in the whole commentary (more than a half of all quotations in Book I).

Macrobius:
Two quotations (without reference, from *Comm. in somn. Scip.*).

Robertus Grossatesta:
*Notulae in Eth. Nic.* (always quoted as "Lincolniensis" by Walter Burley): 77 quotations in the whole commentary: five quotations in Book I, 12 in Book II, 20 in Book III, four in Book IV, three in Book V, five in Book VI, 14 in Book VI, nine in Book VIII, two in Book IX, three in Book X.

Seneca:
*Epist. ad Lucilium*: one quotation;
*De clementia*: three quotations;
three quotations without reference.

Thomas Aquinas:
The first passage explicitly quoted by Burley is *In Eth. Nic.* 1.2.4: "Si tamen *li* animalium sit grecus huius nominis anima (huius nominis anima P: de *li* animal V), sicut sanctus Thomas exposuit, satis est expositio conveniens: sic enim delectari est proprium animalium quia convenit omni animali";[12] quotation of Thomas Aquinas, *Sent. lib. Eth.* 1.13: "quamvis enim appetitum aliquem, scilicet naturalem, attribuamus rebus inanimatis, delectationem tamen non attribuimus nisi cognitionem habentibus; ex quo datur intelligi quod delectatio proprie pertinet ad operationes animae, in quibus ponitur felicitas".[13]

The second passage is *In Eth. Nic.* 2.3.3: "et secundum communem expositionem Philosophus ponit hic tria documenta per que homo potest attingere ad hoc quod fiat virtuosus";[14] we find the quoted passage in

[12] V fol. 16vb; P fol. 12rb. The lecture of P "huius nominis anima" seems to be more correct than the lecture of V "de *li* animal": cf. the quoted Thomas's passage ("ad operationes animae") and the note of Grosseteste on "animal" (1098 b 15): "ab anima, non ab animali"—cf. Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea* 1.10 (= 1.8 in modern editions), ed. R.A. Gauthier in *Aristoteles latinus* . . . vol. XXVI 1–3, fasc. tertius (Leiden: 1972), 152, line 17. At the end of the quoted passage V add incorrectly "et non soli animali".

[13] Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia Libri Ethicorum* 1.13, ed. R.A. Gauthier in *S. Thomae de Aquino Opera Omnia*, vol. 47.1 (Rome: 1969), 46, lines 22–27.

[14] V fol. 48ra; P fol. 37va.

Thomas, *Sent. lib. Eth.* 2.11: "Circa primum ponit tria documenta. Quorum primum . . ."[15]

The third passage is *In Eth. Nic.* 7.1.4: "Et quedam sunt intermedia et illa sunt, ut exponit expositor communis (et illa sunt . . . V sicut illa que . . . sunt P), ut pecunia, lucrum, honor et huiusmodi";[16] the quoted passage is Thomas, *Sent. lib. Eth.* 7.4: "quaedam vero sunt media inter ista, sicut patet de pecunia et lucro et victoria et honore";[17] after having presented Thomas's explanation, Burley quotes Eustratius's parallel commentary, and states: "et hec expositio est melior quam precedens".[18]

The fourth passage is *In Eth. Nic.* 7.1.7: "Istam litteram: *Intermedium autem* . . . (*Eth. Nic.* VII, 8, 1050 a 15–16) communis expositor exponit sic: quod diuersi sunt gradus delectationum et tritsitiarum . . . Potest etiam intelligi, ut idem expositor dicit, quod homines magis inclinantur";[19] the quoted passage is Thomas, *Sent. lib. Eth.* 7.7: "Et quia diversi sunt gradus delectationum et tristitiarum . . . Potest etiam intelligi quod homines magis inclinantur";[20] here again, after having presented Thomas's explanation, Burley presents Eustratius's explanation of the same passage, and states: "et hec expositio planior est et melior".[21]

Walter Burley (quoting himself):
*In periherm.*: one quotation;
*In IV Phys.*: one quotation.

Moreover, we find at least four explicit references to the *Sacra scriptura*:
*In Eth. Nic.* 1.4.1: "David propheta dicit Deum esse laudabile":[22] with multiple references to the Psalms (47:2; 62:6; 95:4; 101:19; 112:3; 118:117; 144:3);

*In Eth. Nic.* 3.1.3: "Sed honorare patrem et matrem est preceptum in lege":[23] with reference to Deut. 5:16 and Exod. 20:12;

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15 Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia Libri Ethicorum* 2.11, 114–15, lines 35–129.
16 V fol. 152rb; P fol. 108rb.
17 Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia Libri Ethicorum* 7.7, ed. R.A. Gauthier in *S. Thomae de Aquino Opera Omnia*, vol. 47.2 (Rome: 1969), 397, lines 148–49.
18 V fol. 152va; P fol. 108rb.
19 V fol. 156va; P fol. 110vb.
20 Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia Libri Ethicorum* 7.7, 410, lines 52–64.
21 V fol. 156vb; P fol. 110vb.
22 V fol. 25va; P fol. 18vb.
23 V fol. 64vb; P fol. 48va.

*In Eth. Nic.* 8.2.2: "Et sic Christus vocavit Iudam amicum quia Iudas amabatur a Christo, sed non amavit Christum":[24] with reference to Matt. 26:50;

*In Eth. Nic.* 9.1.4: "Adhuc alii sunt mali qui gaudent de malitia sua non solum quando eam committunt, sed etiam postea, de quibus scribitur: *Gaudent cum male fecerint*":[25] with reference to Prov. 2:14.

We find two references to the theological doctrine of the *synderesis*. The first one is *In Eth. Nic.* 6.1.2: "Dico quod prudentia non prestituit (constituit P) finem voluntati, sed ratio naturalis que a theologis (in theologia P) dicitur sinderesis, que continet principia universalia iuris (rationis P) naturalis, prestituit finem voluntati";[26] the second reference is *In Eth. Nic.* 9.1.4: "Aliqua tamen rebellio est in huiusmodi hominibus (*scil.* mali), quia sinderesis remurmurat contra voluntatem. Est enim (autem P) sinderesis una virtus intellectus per quam intellectus remurmurat (*inv.* P) contra voluntatem volentem et precipientem mala operari. Et ita in quolibet homine malo est rebellio et pugna ex parte anime."[27]

The theologians are also quoted at the beginning of Book VIII, concerning the distinction between natural friendship and supernatural friendship (i.e. charity): "unde sicut theologi ponunt quandam amicitiam supernaturalem quam caritatem vocant esse (quam vocant P) virtutem theologicam"; "sicut caritas est excellentissima inter virtutes theologicas".[28]

Only once in the whole commentary does Burley point out the contrast between philosophy and theology, *In Eth. Nic.* 2.3.1: "Cum igitur mors boni hominis sit maius malum quam mendacium iocosum (*inv.* P), est magis eligendum (eligendum est P) iocose mentiri pro salute vite boni viri. (Et *add.* P) Hec est sententia philosophorum, licet quidam theologi dicunt contrarium."[29]

Although the influence of these sources on Burley's thought has to be studied in single cases, we can call attention to the following conclusions. Among the Aristotelian writings, the *Physics* is the most frequently quoted, followed by the *Metaphysics*; the number of Aristotelian sources quoted by Burley is, however, inferior to many contemporary commentaries. The

[24] V fol. 183rb; P fol. 126ra.
[25] V fol. 198rb; P fol. 137vb.
[26] V fol. 129ra; P fol. 94ra.
[27] V fol. 198rb; P fol. 137vb.
[28] V fol. 171ra; P fol. 119va–vb.
[29] V fol. 45ra; P fol. 34vb.

Greek commentators are constantly quoted; however, Eustratius's commentary on Book I seems to have a preponderant influence. Albert too is often quoted, but most of the quotations are to be found in Book I.

The quotations of the *Notulae* (i.e. short notes) on the *Nicomachean Ethics* by Robert Grosseteste are certainly more interesting. The collection of these *Notule* presents the following problems: none of the known manuscripts (with the exception of the MS Oxford, Merton College, 14) presents the *Notule* as an independent work by Grosseteste; moreover, none of these manuscripts presents the same number of *Notule*; finally, not all the *Notule* are attributed to Grosseteste, but are partially anonymous.[30] Given these circumstances, it is clear that the several *Notule* quoted by Burley and explicitly attributed to Grosseteste might be of considerable importance in order to reconstruct, at least in part, this corpus of *Notule*.

Theological sources, though not completely missing, are not numerous:[31] it is quite evident that the intention of Burley is to write a philosophical commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Classical authors like Cicero, Seneca, and Boethius are seldom quoted: this fact is quite surprising, since these authors are abundantly used by the commentators of the *Ethics* in the 13th and 14th centuries. Avicenna and Averroes too are quoted only a few times.

The commentary of Thomas Aquinas on the *Ethics* is definitely the most important source of Burley, despite the small number of explicit quotations. Although in some cases Burley rejects Thomas's explanation of Aristotle's text, we can state that Burley's commentary is a Thomistic commentary on the *Ethics*.[32] As we will see, in some cases Burley seems to have used also the *Summa theologiae*.[33]

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[30] On the quotations of the *Notule* by Grosseteste in Burley's *Ethics* commentary, see S.H. Thomson, "The *Notule* of Grosseteste on the *Nicomachean Ethics*," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 19 (1933), 195–218; according to Thomson, Burley could have used Grosseteste's autograph, which was in Oxford; this fact increases considerably the philological interest of these quotations. See also F.M. Powicke, "Robert Grosseteste and the Nicomachean Ethics," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 16 (1930), 85–104.

[31] One can compare Burley's commentary with Gerald's, which is particularly rich in theological sources and topics.

[32] Scholars confirm this strong Thomistic inspiration of Burley's *Ethics* commentary. Saarinen, "Walter Burley," 61, states: "Thus Burley's commentary employs a method which adds a lot of new material and new perspectives to Thomas' literal exposition"; I do not agree with this statement: as I will try to show in this study, Burley's commentary is almost never original, even in the *questiones* and in the *notanda*; the non-Thomistic material that we find in the commentary come from other sources (Albert, Eustratius, Grosseteste), and thus it is not original.

[33] There is, in Burley's *Ethics* commentary, a small number of references to *quidam*, *aliqui*, or *alii* which I have not identified.

### *Human Happiness: Contemplative Life and Political Virtue*

The definition of human happiness, or human good, is the fundamental problem of Aristotelian ethics. Burley's commentary on Book I and on the second half of Book X of the *Nicomachean Ethics*—where the problem of human happiness is discussed—is extremely faithful to the Aristotelian doctrine. Since he explains Aristotle's text from a philosophical point of view, Burley avoids references to the supernatural happiness of the afterlife, and shuns problems arisen by the confrontation between the Aristotelian theory of human happiness and the Christian conception.

Following Aristotle, Burley states that human happiness is the act of the best faculty of man (i.e. intellect), according to his most excellent virtue; intellect's most excellent virtue, as is demonstrated in Book VI, is wisdom (*sapientia*). The act of wisdom is thus human happiness. This philosophical theory, according to Burley, agrees with truth (*concordat veritati*):

> Huiusmodi virtus habens principatum et cognitionem divinorum videtur esse virtus speculativa, et hoc est confessum in his que prius, scilicet in VI huius, quod in operatione speculativa (*om.* P) intellectus secundum optimam virtutem eius, scilicet secundum (*om.* V) sapientiam, consistit felicitas; et hoc etiam concordat veritati, scilicet (*om.* V) quod perfecta felicitas consistit in operatione speculativa intellectus secundum optimam virtutem eius (*inv.* P).[34]

Burley points out two signs which demonstrate the excellence of intellect among the faculties of the human soul. Firstly, the intellect has the power to lead the acts of other faculties: the appetite and the bodily acts.[35] The second sign is the relationship between the intellect and superior beings (i.e. spiritual beings): first of all, the intellect is the only human faculty capable of knowing such beings: "Inter potentias anime humane (*om.* P)

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[34] *In Eth. Nic.* 10.2.2 (V fol. 223ra; P fol. 153rb–va).

[35] Ibid. (V fol. 223ra; P fol. 153va): "Primum (*scil.* signum excellentie) accipitur per comparationem intellectus ad ea que sunt in homine infra intellectum (infra intellectum *om.* P), cuiusmodi sunt appetitus sensitiuus (*om.* P) et membra corporea hominis, quibus intellectus dominatur et principatur." Following a traditional Aristotelian theory (see *Pol.* I, 5), Burley states that intellect's dominancy on the appetite is like the *principatus politicus*, where the subjects are free and not completely subdued to the king, since appetite is still independent from intellect, and can ignore intellect (like the incontinent); on the contrary, intellect's dominancy on the body is like the *principatus dispoticus*, where the subjects have no possibility of insubordination, since body obeys entirely to intellect's orders, see *In Eth. Nic.* 10.2.2 (V fol. 223ra; P fol. 153va): "Intellectus respectu concupiscibilis et irascibilis principatur principatu politico, . . . sed membris corporeis principatur intellectus principatu despotico (disposito V)." Here, like in many other passages of the commentary, Burley fails to analyze the problem of the relationship between the intellect and the will.

solus intellectus habet cognitionem de rebus divinis (de rebus divinis V: divinorum P)";[36] moreover, the intellect is a divine faculty. Burley asserts that the divine nature of the intellect can be explained in two ways. According to Averroes, the intellect is a divine and eternal being, separated from matter, while according to Aristotle, intellect is not divine in himself, but it is the most divine among our faculties, since it is spiritual, not material, which makes it similar to separated substances.[37] At this point of the commentary, Burley does not reject the Averroistic theory of the unity of intellect; however, a passage of Book IX, in which monopsychism is explicitly rejected,[38] seems to suggest that Burley, at the time he wrote his *Ethics* commentary, had abandoned the theory of the unity of the intellect that he had adopted in the commentary of Book III of the *De anima* (a theory studied by Kuksewicz in an excellent study on Burley's Averroism).[39]

Although Burley does not deal with two traditional problems (if happiness is an act of the intellect or the will, and if will is a superior faculty than intellect), which is quite surprising in an *Ethics* commentary, the above-quoted passages nevertheless suggest that Burley held an intellec-

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[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.: "Intellectus humanus vel est simpliciter quoddam divinum, sempiternum a materia separatum (a materia separatum V; et separatum a materia P), sicut aliqui posuerunt—et hec fuit opinio commentatoris (*om.* P) Averrois, ut patet ex commento suo super III *De anima*—, aut (vel P) intellectus (*om.* P) est quoddam divinum non simpliciter, sed est divinissimum eorum que in nobis sunt propter maiorem convenientiam quam habet cum substantiis separatis, secundum quod eius operatio est sine organo corporeo—et hec fuit opinio Aristotelis."

[38] Commenting *Eth. Nic.* IX, 1168 b 28–1169 a 4, where Aristotle identifies intellect with the most fundamental (*principalissima*) among man's faculty, Burley states, *In Eth. Nic.* 9.2.1 (V fol. 203vb; P fol. 140vb–141ra): "Notandum est (*om.* P) hic secundum Philosophum quod intellectus vel est ipse homo vel principalissimum in homine. Ex quo patet (manifeste *add.* P) quod opinio Commentatoris de intellectu materiali (universali P), de quo Philosophus hic loquitur, est falsa. Si enim intellectus sit ipse homo, necesse est intellectum plurificari ad plurificationem hominum. Et si intellectus sit principalissimum in homine, oportet quod sit forma substantialis hominis per quam homo formaliter distinguitur (*inv.* P) a quolibet alio; et sic unus homo per suum intellectum distinguitur ab alio homine, aliter non distinguitur ab eo (ab eo *om.* P). Et sic oportebit intellectum plurificari ad plurificationem hominum."

[39] The important study by Kuksewicz, "The Problem," illustrates some major philosophical problems of Burley's commentary on Aristotle's *De anima*, and shows its historical relation with psychological theories of some Burley's contemporaries, among others Thomas Wylton and John of Jandun. Kuksewicz concludes that Walter Burley: "started with a decisively non-Averroistic theory of soul in *De potentiis animae* and *Questiones super tertium De anima*. The second stage of Burley's evolution would be his commentary on Book II of the *De anima*, where he became hesitant in his formerly strong anti-Averroistic attitude. The third stage will, therefore, be his commentary on Book III of the *De anima*, which presents a clearly Averroistic conception of the soul" (375–76).

tualist position about human happiness: in the sections of his commentary which concern human happiness, he never refers to will's role in the achievement of human happiness, nor does he ever refer to the acts of desire and love, which are the acts of the will in human happiness.

In the next section of his *Ethics*, Aristotle proceeds to demonstrate that the theoretical life is superior to the activity of the other moral virtues;[40] following the commentary tradition, Burley then considers the problem of the comparison between active and contemplative life. Burley develops five arguments in order to demonstrate the superiority of contemplative life.

1. Contemplative life is better than active life since intellect is not strictly a human faculty, but somehow allows man to participate to divine nature and to the activity of separated substances. Man is composed by bodily and spiritual nature: among the three kinds of acts accomplished by men, only the acts of moral virtues are strictly human, since in these kinds of acts the sensitive and irrational soul is in harmony with the intellective soul. On the opposite, neither the acts of the sensitive soul ("operationes corporales et sensitiue"), nor the acts of the intellective faculty, are strictly human, since the former are shared with irrational beings, while the latter are shared with the separated substances.[41]

2. Contemplative life is better than active life since it is the act of a faculty which is separated ("separata") from matter: intellect is the sole human faculty able to act separately from the body.[42]

3. Contemplative life is superior since it grants independence from exterior goods: active life entails practicing moral virtue, and the acts of moral virtues are accomplished through exterior and material goods; on the contrary, contemplative life is accomplished by intellectual virtue, and those who practice contemplative life do not need more than what is strictly necessary in order to survive; hence, contemplative life is more independent than active life.[43]

4. Contemplative life is better than active life since it is shared with God and separated substances: no one denies that God and angels practice a higher form of contemplative life; on the contrary, no one attributes to God and angels the acts and the dispositions of moral virtue.[44]

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[40] *Eth. Nic.* X, 1177 b 26–1178 b 32.
[41] *In Eth. Nic.* 10.2.2 (V fol. 224vb–228ra; P fol. 154va–vb).
[42] *In Eth. Nic.* 10.2.3 (V fol. 226rb; P fol. 155rb).
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.

5. Contemplative life is better since it is man's proper life: no one attributes it to the irrational animals; on the contrary, irrational animals can somehow participate to the acts of moral action, for instance, child piety.[45]

Thus Burley neglects the extremely animated debate concerning the relationship between active and contemplative life. On this point, Burley's commentary is less advanced than most of the commentaries of his predecessors, since he does not discuss the apparent contradictions about the two genera of life in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.[46]

## *Universal Good*

The critics that Aristotle addresses to Plato's conception of universal Good are an absolutely crucial moment in the *Nicomachean Ethics* for those who wish to understand Aristotle's conception of human good.

Nevertheless, Burley's account of this chapter does not bring an original light on this major theoretical problem: the general philosophical assumptions are taken from the commentary of Eustratius, while the *expositio littere* is close to Thomas's commentary.[47]

Following Eustratius, Burley states that Aristotle's criticism of universal Good is not directed against Plato's theory, but rather against some philosophers who have not understood Plato's authentic theory. Actually, according to Eustratius and Burley, Plato asserts the existence of God, which is a separate and absolute Good, and not—as Aristotle seems to affirm—the existence of a separated idea of Good which is homonymous

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[45] Ibid.

[46] While in Book X Aristotle states the superiority of contemplative life, on the contrary in Book I (*Eth. Nic.* I, 1094 a 25–28, and especially 1094 b 7–11) he seems to assign to politics and to common good the highest perfection among human activities. In order to explain these passages, Albert and Thomas had shaped the theory of the relative superiority of the active life on the contemplative life: according to this theory, contemplative life is superior in an absolute sense, while active life is superior insofar as it is more useful to the community (see Albert the Great, *Super Ethica* 10.13, ed. W. Kübel in *S. Alberti Magni Opera Omnia*, vol. 14.2 (Münster in Westfalen: 1987), 761, lines 20ff.; and Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia Libri Ethicorum* 1.2, 7–9.

[47] On this topic, see I. Costa, "Il problema dell'omonimia del bene in alcuni commenti scolastici all'*Etica Nicomachea*," *Documenti e Studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 17 (2006), 157–230; Id., "Il problema dell'omonimia del bene nell'esegesi dell'*Etica Nicomachea*. Il secolo XIV," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 23 (2012), 429–473.

with every other particular and material good.[48] Secondly, there are two kinds of universal good: there is a universal good in logic, which is universal since it can be predicated to several particular goods, and there is a universal Good in metaphysics, which is universal since it is the cause of the existence of the other particular goods.[49] Lastly, Burley recalls the theory of the threefold status of the universal, which had been employed by Eustratius to explain the Platonic conception.[50]

Burley agrees with Eustratius in criticizing Aristotle, when Eustratius demonstrates the necessity of the existence of a first divine Good which is the cause of any other being, and, quoting Eustratius, he states that this divine Good is identical to the unmoved mover of Book XII of *Metaphysics*.[51]

However, the stance that Burley next proceeds to adopt appears particularly disappointing, since after having accepted Eustratius's defense of Plato, showing that Plato did not assert the univocity of good, he starts

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[48] *In Eth. Nic.* 1.2.3 (V fol. 9vb; P fol. 6vb): "Secundo est notandum, secundum Commentatorem, quod Aristoteles hic (quod Aristoteles hic V; hic quod Aristoteles P) tentat quedam dicere adversus Platonem, que forte Platoni non obsistunt, sed his qui secundum quod non oportet dicta illius (Platonis P) recipiunt. Illud enim bonum separatum quod Plato posuit est illud bonum ineffabile quod est (quod est *om.* P) causa omnium aliorum entium viventium et non viventium. Et ita posuit Deum esse bonum separatum in quo consistit felicitas." Cf. Eustratius, *In Eth. Nic.* 1.7, in *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle in the Latin Translation of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln († 1253)*, vol. I, *Eustratius on Book I, and the Anonymous Scholia on Books II, III, and IV*, ed. H.P.F. Mercken (Leiden: 1973), 68–69, lines 52–84.

[49] Ibid.: "Tertio est notandum, secundum Eustratium, quod universale dicitur dupliciter, scilicet predicatione, sicut in logica, et sic non accipitur hic, alio modo illud dicitur universale cuius causalitas se extendit ad plura, et sic accipitur hic" (cf. Eustratius, *In Eth. Nic.* 1.7, 69, lines 85–88).

[50] Ibid.: "Quarto est intelligendum, secundum Eustratium, quod totum dicitur tripliciter, scilicet ante partes, ex partibus et in partibus. Ante partes, sicut species et idee, que tota dicuntur (et *add.* P) universalia in conditoris mente existentes. Ex partibus, ut composita et in multis partita sive omoiomera (sive omoiomera V; sive homogenea sive etherogenea P). In partibus autem, ut universalia (intelligibilia P), que de multis dicuntur et posteriora generatione dicuntur, quia intellectus abstrahit tale totum a suis singularibus. Et de tali toto dicit Aristoteles quod nihil est (prius *add.* P) vel posterius est." See Eustratius, *In Eth. Nic.* I, 7, 69–70, lines 88–29.

[51] Ibid. (V fol. 10ra; P fol. 6vb): "Eustratius dicit hic quod rationes ille non concludunt contra Platonem, quia per istam ideam boni Plato intellexit primum bonum, scilicet Deum (*om.* P), quod omnia appetunt, et per comparationem ad quod omnia (quod omnia P; quem alia V) dicuntur bona secundum prius et posterius; unde Aristoteles, XII (in II P) *Metaphysice*, ponit quoddam bonum separatum a toto universo ad quod totum universum ordinatur sicut exercitus ad bonum ducem. Et ideo dicit Eustratius quod Aristoteles non arguit contra opinionem Platonis, sed contra eos qui dicta Platonis male recipiunt et intelligunt."

copying Thomas's commentary, where Aristotle's criticism of Plato is firmly accepted:

> Secundum veritatem, materiale et immateriale non sunt in eadem specie, nec simplex et compositum, nec habent eandem diffinitionem. Si tamen bonum esset una species communis bono separato, quod ponitur idea, et bono particulari in materia, sicut Plato posuit, ex hoc sequerentur omnia ista inconvenientia. Unde illa positio Platonis includit contradictoria . . . Similiter, secundum veritatem, bonum perpetuum est melius bono non perpetuo ceteris paribus. Si tamen bonum esset species, sicut Plato posuit, bonum perpetuum non esset melius bono non perpetuo, nec semper esse quam non semper esse.[52]

Burley unsuccessfully tries to conciliate two contradictory positions: following the first position (taken by Eustratius), he denies that Plato has ever affirmed univocity of good; following the second position (taken by Thomas and faithful to Aristotle), he ascribes to Plato the univocity of good.

Hence Burley assumes the traditional Aristotelian conclusion according to which good is predicated of the different material and particular goods neither purely equivocally nor univocally, but analogically:

> Bonum non dicitur de omnibus bonis secundum rationes omnino diuersas sicut accidit in his que sunt equiuoca a casu, sed bonum dicitur de multis habentibus attributionem ad unum, scilicet ad finem ultimum.[53]

In the explanation of this important chapter, Burley restricts his sources to Eustratius and Thomas: he seems to ignore both Albert and post-Thomistic commentaries of the *Ethics* (such as Henry of Friemar, Guy Terrena, and Gerald of Odo), which included difficult and interesting questions about Aristotle's criticism of Plato.

## *Moral Virtue and Cardinal Virtues*[54]

According to Walter Burley, *prudentia* belongs to the practical intellect, justice to the will, while the ten remaining moral virtues enumerated by

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[52] Ibid. (V fol. 10vb; P fol. 7rb).

[53] Ibid. (V fol. 11va; P fol. 8ra). This problem—Burley concludes—is to be considered by another science (i.e. metaphysics): "Sed qualiter bonum dicitur de multis secundum unam rationem vel secundum diversas rationes oportet nunc relinquere, quia hoc pertinet ad considerationem metaphysici. Similiter determinare de idea boni non est proprium presenti negotio, sed hoc (hic V) magis pertinet ad metaphysicam" (ibid.).

[54] I wish to thank István Bejczy for letting me make use of his valuable study *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages: A Study in Moral Thought from the Fourth to the Fourteenth Centuries*, before its publication.

Aristotle at the end of Book II belong to the irascible and concupiscible appetite: *fortitudo, mansuetudo, magnificentia*, and *magnanimitas* belong to the irascible appetite; *temperantia, liberalitas, honoris amativa, veritas, affabilitas*, and *eutrapelia* belong to the concupiscible appetite. With the exception of *prudentia*, which is not a moral virtue, justice rules on human actions (*operationes*), while the remaining ten virtues rule on human passions (*passiones*).[55]

The division and classification of virtues on the basis of their relationship with passions deserves to be mentioned, since it seems to differ from the classifications adopted by Thomas Aquinas, Giles of Rome, and Gerald of Odo.

According to Burley, passions can be caused either by a good or by an evil (*ex bono absolute*/*ex malo absolute*); moreover, passions can be caused either by a hard good or by a hard evil (*ex bono arduo* or *ex malo arduo*). Passions which are caused by a hard evil can be caused either by a future hard evil or by a present hard evil; passions which are caused by a future hard evil are fear and confidence; they are ruled by the virtue of courage (*fortitudo*). Passions which are caused by a present hard evil are rage (or desire of vengeance) and the *inirascibilitas* (i.e. refusing the vengeance); they are ruled by clemency (*mansuetudo*). Passions which are caused by a hard good can be caused either by a useful hard good (i.e. the *pecunia*) or by a fair hard good (i.e. honors); the name of these passions is not explicitly mentioned by Burley. The former are ruled by magnificency (*magnificentia*); the latter are ruled by magnanimity (*magnanimitas*). All the virtues are virtues of the irascible appetite.

Passions which are caused by a good can be caused either by the good of an individual man in himself, or by the good of a man as he lives in a "social" context (*bonum in se*/*bonum in ordine ad alios*). Burley presents a threefold division of the first kind of goods (*bonum in se*): pleasant, useful, or fair (*delectabile*/*utile*/*honestum*). Passions caused by the pleasant goods are ruled by the *temperantia*; passions caused by the useful goods are ruled by the *liberalitas*; passions caused by fair goods are ruled by the anonymous virtue which Giles of Rome had called the *philotimia*. Passions which concern the second kind of goods (*bonum in ordine ad alios*) can be divided into three kinds since they can be related to the expression of personal thoughts (*veritatis manifestatio*), the appropriate behavior with acquaintances (*decens conversatio in vita*), or, lastly, the acts of recreation

[55] Giles of Rome, *De regimine principum* 1.2.3 (Rome: 1607) fol. 51, supports the same division of virtues.

and amusement: the first kind of passion is ruled by *veritas*, the second kind by the *affabilitas* or *amicitia*, the third kind by *eutrapelia*.[56] All the virtues which rule passions whose object is a good in itself are virtues of the concupiscent appetite. The name of all passions which are caused by a good is not explicitly mentioned by Burley. Burley's division of virtues can be represented by the following diagram:

| | Obiectum | obiectum | virtus | subiectum |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| passiones causantur | ex bono absolute hominis in se | delectabile (cibus, potus, venerea) | temperantia | appetitus concupiscibilis |
| | | utile (pecunia) | liberalitas | |
| | | honestum (honor) | philotimia | |
| | ex bono absolute hominis in ordine ad alios | veritatis manifestatio | veritas | |
| | | decens conversatio | affabilitas seu amicitia | |
| | | ludus | eutrapelia | |
| | ex malo absolute | (*desunt*) | (*desunt*) | |
| | ex bono arduo | utilis (pecunia) | magnificentia | appetitus irascibilis |
| | | honestum (honor) | magnanimitas | |
| | ex malo arduo | futuro (mors) | fortitudo | |
| | | presens (vindicta) | mansuetudo | |

Although seemingly methodical, Burley's classification of virtues and passion is nonetheless somehow incoherent: at the beginning of this section, Burley states that passions of the concupiscible appetite are produced either by a good or by an evil, while passions of the irascible appetite are produced either by a hard evil or by a hard good: "Passiones autem insurgunt in nobis ex bono vel malo absolute, et omnes tales passiones pertinent ad (appetitum *add.* P) concupiscibilem; aut insurgunt ex bono vel malo

[56] *In Eth. Nic.* 2.3.1.

arduo, et omnes tales passiones sunt in irascibili";[57] yet in the remaining part of the section he mentions no passion produced by an evil (*ex malo absolute*). Burley's classification thus appears somehow asymmetrical.

This classification seems to depend both on Thomas's classification in *Ia IIae* (q. 60, art. 5) and on Giles of Rome in *De regimine principum* (1.2.3). Yet both Thomas and Giles do not talk about passions produced by a hard evil (*ex malo arduo*), and Thomas leaves this possibility implicitly out.[58] If compared to his sources, Thomas and Giles, Burley's classification presents a double fault: first, he subdivides evil objects into absolutely evil objects and hard evil objects, while this division does not appear in Thomas or in Giles; secondly, he states that *mansuetudo* and *fortitudo* rule passions whose objects are hard evil, while according to Thomas and Giles such objects are absolutely evil.

The treatise *De regimine principum* by Giles of Rome is probably the most significant source for Burley's classification of passions and virtues. According to Giles, passions can be produced either by a good or by an evil. There can be two different kinds of goods by which passion is produced: the good of man in himself (*bonum hominis in se*) or the good of man as he is in a social context (*bonum hominis in ordine ad alios*). The first kind of good can be divided in three species: the delightful (*delectabile*), the useful (*utile*), or the fair (*honestum*). Passions produced by delightful objects (i.e. *cibus, potus, venerea*) are ruled by *temperantia*; passions produced by useful objects (i.e. *pecunia*) are ruled by *liberalitas* in the concupiscible appetite and by *magnificentia* in the irascible appetite; passions produced by fair objects (i.e. *honores*) are ruled by *honoris amativa* in the concupiscible appetite and by *magnanimitas* in the irascible appetite. The second kind of good (*bonum hominis in ordine ad alios*) produces passions which are ruled by the virtues of the concupiscible appetite: *veritas, affabilitas, eutrapelia*. All these passions are not explicitly mentioned by Giles. Furthermore, passions which are produced by an evil can be caused either by a present evil or by a future evil (*ex malo presenti*/*ex malo futuro*). The present evil produces the passions of *ira* and *mitiditas* which are ruled by

[57] Ibid. (V fol. 45ra; P fol. 35rb).

[58] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theol.*, Ia IIae, q. 60, art. 5, *ad quartum*, in *S. Thomae de Aquino Opera Omnia*, vol. 6 (Rome: 1891), 392b: "Bonum fortius est ad movendum quam malum . . . Unde malum non facit difficultatem rationi, quae requirat virtutem, nisi sit excellens: quod videtur esse unum in uno genere passionis. Unde circa iras non ponitur nisi una virtus, scilicet mansuetudo: et similiter circa audacias una sola, scilicet fortitudo." See also Giles of Rome, *De regimine principum* 1.2.3, fol. 53.

*mansuetudo*. The future evil produces the passions of fear and confidence which are ruled by *fortitudo*.[59]

In conclusion, according to Thomas, Giles, and Burley, there are 11 moral virtues. Justice rules actions, and not passions, and it is a virtue of the will, not of the sensitive appetite; that is what distinguishes justice from all other virtues. The ten remaining virtues rule passions: four virtues rule passions of the irascible appetite, namely: *fortitudo*, *mansuetudo*, *magnanimitas, magnificentia*; while six virtues rule passions of the concupiscible appetite: *temperantia, liberalitas, philotimia* (which Giles calls "*honoris amativa*"), *veritas*, *affabilitas*, *eutrapelia*.

The common point between Burley and Giles is that the only passions whose names are mentioned in the course of the classification are *timor, audacia, ira*, and *inirascibilitas* (which Giles calls "*mitiditas*"); on the contrary, Thomas, in *Ia IIae*, q. 60, art. 5, mentions a different number of passions.

Burley's classification of virtues and passions seems to ignore the classification by Gerald of Odo. First of all, Gerald includes several Christian virtues in his classification, mostly about sexual pleasures.[60] Furthermore, in Gerald's classification the number of virtues is not deduced from the number of passions, but rather by the kinds of objects or of matter (*materia*) of virtue: virtue therefore rules the concupiscible appetite in desiring either delightful objects (*circa materiam delectabilem*) or useful objects (*circa materiam utilem*); ruling appetite about delightful objects is the task of *temperantia* and of the many virtues connected to it (virtues which rule different kinds of pleasures, like *sobrietas, eutrapelia*, and *amicitia*); ruling appetite about useful objects is the task of *liberalitas, magnificentia*, and *iustitia*. Moreover, virtue rules irascible appetite in desiring a good or in rejecting an evil (*circa bonum vel circa malum*); four virtues rule the irascible appetite in desiring a good: *magnanimitas, longanimitas, equanimitas*, and *humilitas*; five virtues rule the irascible appetite in rejecting an evil: *fortitudo, secura fidentia, tolerantia, patientia*, and *mansuetudo*.[61] Gerald's division leads to some original conclusions: for instance, according to

[59] Giles of Rome, *De regimine principum* 1.2.3, fol. 52–56.

[60] See Gerald of Odo, *In Eth. Nic.* 2.7, q. 22 (Venice: 1500), fol. 35vb–36ra; for example, Gerald states (fol. 35vb) that *temperantia* is divided in four species: *virginitas, castitas, vidualis pudicitia, coniugalis fides*; or that *luxuria* is divided in six species: *simplex fornicatio soluti cum soluta*, *stuprum in corruptione virginum, incestus in concubitu consanguinearum vel affinium, adulterium contra matrimonium, sacrilegium in corruptione sanctimonialium, sodomia in quocumque actu venereo contra naturam*. All these virtues and these vices are absent from Burley's commentary.

[61] Ibid.

Gerald, *magnificentia* is a virtue of the concupiscible appetite, and not a virtue of the irascible appetite, as Burley, Thomas, and Giles state.

Concerning the relationship between cardinal virtues and the other intellectual and moral virtues, Burley repeats Thomas's theory, and, subsequently, he seems to assume an alternative, non-Thomistic, solution to the problem. Regrettably, Burley illustrates this second solution very synthetically. In the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, Thomas introduces the ancient Stoic theory according to which the four cardinal virtues are genera which contain the other virtues as species. This theory assumes virtues to be distinguished in four principal *modi*: "secundum quosdam generales modos virtutum, qui quidem sunt quatuor".[62] The *prudentia* establishes the *rectitudo rationis*, the rational rule which must direct the virtuous act; justice establishes equity in human acts; courage provides constancy to the appetite in acting virtuously; temperance makes the appetite resist passions which induce to act against reason.[63] According to Aquinas, "sic locuti sunt de his virtutibus Tullius et Seneca et alii quidam. Unde posuerunt has virtutes esse quasi generales et dixerunt omnes virtutes esse earum species."[64] Thomas rejects this theory and shows it to be inconsistent with the Aristotelian conception of virtue. First of all, the four *modi* according to which the four cardinal virtues are distinguished are, in Thomas's opinion, general characters which belong to all moral virtues, thus the four *modi* cannot be identified to four particular virtues: every virtue has to follow the recta *ratio*, and it has to make the agent act fairly and confidently without following irrational passions. Secondly, virtues have to be distinguished—as Aristotle does—on the basis of their objects (*secundum obiecta sive secundum materias*); therefore, cardinal virtues are principal virtues not as genera, but since their form is shaped by principal objects (*quia species earum accipiuntur secundum quaedam principalia*); consequently, the relationship existing between cardinal virtues and secondary virtues is not the same relationship existing between genera and species, but it is rather the relationship existing between principal and secondary virtues, which reflects the hierarchy existing between principal and secondary objects of virtue.[65]

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[62] Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia Libri Ethicorum* 2.8, 102, lines 35–73.

[63] Ibid., especially lines 60–64: "Nam ad prudentiam pertinet ipsa rectitudo rationis, ad iustitiam vero aequalitas in operationibus constituta, ad fortitudinem autem firmitas animi, ad temperantiam vero refrenatio vel repressio passionum."

[64] Ibid. Gauthier's apparatus, although extremely concise, provides all the direct and indirect sources of this theory, especially lines 34–69, 70, 71; the theory of cardinal virtues as genera is accepted, among others, by Eustratius.

[65] Ibid., 103.

After having faithfully summarized Thomas's solution, Burley seems to present two alternative solutions to the problem:

> <1> Videtur tamen mihi quod opinio Senece et Tullii[66] possit (potest P) probabiliter sustineri, scilicet quod virtutes cardinales sunt genera subalterna continentia sub se virtutes speciales. Iste (Ille P) enim virtutes que specialiter (principaliter P) important rectitudinem rationis continentur sub prudentia, ut ebulia, gnome et huiusmodi, de quibus determinatur in sexto huius; et que primo (principaliter P) important equalitatem continentur sub iustitia, ut patet de speciebus iustitie de quibus determinatur in quinto; et que principaliter important firmitatem animi continentur sub fortitudine, cuiusmodi est virtus equanimitatis, que importat principaliter firmitatem animi in prosperis et (in prosperis et *om.* P) in adversis; et que primo (principaliter P) important refrenationem passionum continentur sub temperantia. <2> Vel potest (posset P) dici quod ille (iste P) quatuor virtutes que dicuntur cardinales uno modo sunt species, scilicet ut sunt circa determinatam materiam, et alio modo sunt genera subalterna, ut dictum est, et sic proprie dicuntur cardinales.[67]

The problem is that Burley, who is usually prolix, is extremely concise in this case and does not explain precisely the relationship between Thomas's rejection of the Stoic theory and the two alternative solutions. In the first alternative solution Burley simply seems to explain in terms of genera and species what Thomas had explained in terms of principal and secondary; while the second alternative solution suggests that Thomas's and the Stoics' theories could somehow coexist and that cardinal virtues could be conceived both as species (*uno modo sunt species*) and genera (*alio modo sunt genera subalterna*).[68] But in both cases, Thomas's rejection appears to lack a detailed demonstration. In this case, as in many other cases in his commentary on the *Ethics*, Burley offers to the reader a collection of different *positiones* or *opiniones*, rather than an original explanation of moral problems.

## *The* subiectum *of Moral Virtue*

Burley holds a Thomistic position on the problem of the *subiectum* of moral virtue. The question is discussed at the end of Book I: "utrum virtutes

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[66] Thomas had introduced the theory of cardinal virtues as genera as Seneca's and Cicero's theory; see ibid., 102, lines 70–71, with Gauthier's apparatus.

[67] *In Eth. Nic.* 2.3.1 (V fol. 46rb; P fol. 36rb).

[68] At present I have found no possible sources for this second solution.

morales sint ponende in appetitu sensitivo vel in appetitu intellectivo" (if moral virtues are dispositions of the sensitive appetite or of the will).

Before presenting the solution to the question, Burley lists the four traditional opinions concerning the problem without mentioning the name of their authors. First comes Godfrey of Fontaines, according to whom all moral virtues are in the sensitive appetite; second comes Henry of Ghent, according to whom all moral virtues are in the will; third comes Peter of Auvergne, according to whom all moral virtues are disposition both of the will and of the sensitive appetite; fourth comes Thomas, according to whom all the virtues which are *circa operationes* (as justice) are in the will, while all virtues which are *circa passiones* (as temperance or courage) are virtues of the sensitive appetite.[69] Burley states that he will follow the fourth opinion: "Et hanc opinionem ad presens teneo recitando omnibus aliis pretermissis."

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[69] *In Eth. Nic.* 1.4.2 (V fol. 29va; P fol. 21vb): "Circa istam dubitationem sunt quatuor opiniones. Una opinio est quod omnis virtus moralis est in appetitu sensitivo et nulla in appetitu intellectivo. Alia est opinio quod quelibet virtus moralis est in appetitu intellectivo et nulla est (*om.* P) in appetitu sensitivo. Tertia est opinio quod in utroque appetitu sunt omnes virtutes morales eedem (*om.* P) secundum speciem, alie tamen secundum numerum sunt in appetitu uno (*inv.* P) et alie in alio. Quarta opinio est (*inv.* P) quod virtus moralis que est circa operationes, ut iustitia, est in appetitu intellectivo, et alie virtutes que sunt circa passiones sunt in appetitu sentitivo. Et hanc opinionem ad presens teneo recitando omnibus aliis pretermissis." The four *opiniones* quoted by Burley can be read in the following texts: Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodlibet* XIV; Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* IV, q. 22; Peter of Auvergne, *Quodlibet* V, q. 11; Thomas Aquinas: *Ia IIae*, q. 56; *IIa IIae*, q. 58, art. 4. The same four *opiniones* are discussed by John of Pouilly in his *Quodlibet* IV, q. 10, and from the anonymous author (Radulphus Brito?) of the question: "utrum virtutes morales sint in voluntate ut in subiecto vel in quo alio", preserved in the MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, lat. 2173, fol. 69vb–71vb, contemporary—as it seems—of John of Pouilly, see I. Costa, *Le* Questiones *di Radulfo Brito sull'Etica Nicomachea. Introduzione e testo critico* (Turnhout: 2008), 89–90. Among Burley's contemporaries, Henry's position is affirmed by Gerald of Odo, *In Eth. Nic.* 1.10, q. 36, fol. 24va: "Dicendum ad questionem quod virtus moralis omnis est in voluntate et non in appetitu sensitivo." On the contrary, Godfrey's positions are accepted by: (1) John of Pouilly—cf. Th. Graf, *De subiecto psychico gratiae et virtutum secundum doctrinam scholasticorum usque ad medium saeculum XIV*, vol. 2, (Studia Anselmiana) 4 (Rome: 1935), 55*–104*; (2) Guy Terrena, *Questiones super Eth. Nic.* I, q. 29 (Bologna, Biblioteca universitaria, lat. 1625 fol. 14rb; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 3228, fols. 18ra–rb; Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Borghes. 328, fol. 30vb): "Et ideo est aliorum (*scil.* Godefridi) opinio, et manifeste secundum intentionem Philosophi et Commentatoris, quod omnes virtutes morales sunt in appetitu sensitivo et nulla in voluntate"—see also *Quodlibet* I, q. 15, art. 1 edited by Graf, *De subiecto psychico gratiae et virtutum*, 110*–19*, and the *questio disputata* 8, Florence, Biblioteca nazionale centrale, II. IX. 26, fols. 18va–21ra); and (3) the anonymous of the Vat. lat. 2173, fol. 70va: "Tamen quia non credo istam potentiam (*lege* opinionem) esse veram (*scil.* opinio Thomae de Aquino), ideo dico secundum quartam opinionem, quam ad presens teneo, quod omnes virtutes morales, quecumque sint, sunt in appetitu sensitivo et nulla est in voluntate ut in subiecto."

He then reports a number of traditional arguments in order to prove that the will can be the location of a virtue, and that such a virtue is justice.[70]

Burley's argumentation appears more original when he demonstrates the difference between will and natural faculties, such as sight. These cannot be fulfilled by acquired disposition (i.e. by habitus): human will needs to be fulfilled by some habitus because it can fail and quit the right reason; but if every faculty can act badly, why is it that every faculty cannot be the *subiectum* of a habitus? According to Burley, the indifference (*indifferentia*) of a faculty toward his acts can be considered in three different ways: (1) indifference towards acting or not acting at all; (2) indifference towards acting one thing or another; (3) indifference towards acting well or unwell. The acquired disposition, or habitus, are not strictly necessary to determine or rectify the faculty in the three cases: in the first case (indifference toward acting or not acting at all) each faculty is perfectly determined by the agent of the act itself, and it requires no habitus (my eyes are indifferent toward seeing or not seeing, since they can be open or closed; but in order to see I only have to open my eyes, and I do not need any other disposition); in the second case (indifference towards doing one thing or another) the object of the faculty determines the faculty itself, without needing any additional disposition (that I see red or green depends on the color of the object, and my eyes will not need a supplementary disposition in order to see red or green); in the third case (indifference toward acting well or unwell) the faculty needs one additional disposition, since in that case neither the subject nor the object of the action can prevent the error (having an appetite is not sufficient in order to act virtuously and according to right reason towards the objects of moral actions).[71]

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[70] *In Eth. Nic.* 1.4.2, (V fol. 29va; P fol. 21vb): "Primo igitur probo (ecce *add.* P) quod in voluntate oportet ponere habitum virtuosum. Secundo quod ille habitus est iustitia." The first argument runs (ibid.): virtue is necessary in that faculty (*potentia*) which can act well or unwell towards its objects. Will is a faculty which can act well or unwell towards its objects. Hence will needs one or more virtues. It is a traditional argument, which can be found, for example, in Peter of Auvergne, *Quodlibet* V, q. 11 (Graf, *De subiecto psychico gratiae et virtutum*, 23*, lines 23–31). The second part of the *solutio*, where Burley demonstrates that justice is the virtue of the will (V fol. 29va–vb; P fol. 21vb), repeats Thomas's arguments: cf. *Summa theol.*, IIa IIae, q. 58, art. 4, in *S. Thomae de Aquino Opera Omnia*, vol. 9 (Rome: 1897), 12a–b.

[71] Ibid.: "Et si dicatur quod omnis potentia est indifferens ad recte agendum et ad non recte agendum, ergo (igitur P) in omni potentia oportet ponere habitum virtuosum, dicendum quod non omnis potentia est indifferens ad recte agendum et ad (*om.* P) non recte agendum. Nam virtus visiva ex sui natura est determinata ad rectitudinem videndi nec ab hac rectitudine impeditur nisi ex parte organi vel medii, et ideo non indiget virtute

The interesting aspect of this position is that Burley's solution seems to apply to the problem of the disposition of the will the late Thomistic theory concerning human action presented in *De malo* 6.[72] In the solution of q. 6, Thomas states that a faculty (*potentia aliqua*) can be moved in two different ways: either *ex parte subiecti*, that is, the motion of the subject of the action, or *ex parte obiecti*, that is, the motion of the object of the action. The faculty of sight, for example, can see or not to see, which depends of the dispositions of the *subiectum* of sight (the open eye sees, the closed eye does not see); moreover, the eye can see white or black, which depends on the color of the seen object, the *obiectum*. Thomas calls these two actions of a faculty "exercise" (*exercitium*) and "specification" (*specificatio*) respectively. The *exercitium* is the dynamic motion of the faculty, while the *specificatio* is the formal element which moves the faculty.[73] When Burley talks about *indifferentia ad agere uel non agere, indifferentia ad agere hoc vel illud*, and *indifferentia ad agere recte et non recte* he means in the first case the *exercitium*, whereas in the second and third case he means the *specificatio*. Although he remains bound to Thomas's theory, Burley seems to have exploited it in a somehow original perspective, since, as far as I know, there are no Thomistic texts which explicitly establish a relationship between the problem of exercise and specification of the will and the problem of the *subiectum* of moral virtue.

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ipsam dirigente vel determinante. Unde non quelibet indifferentia in potentia ad actum facit potentiam (eam P) indigere habitu. Nam in potentia est triplex indifferentia: una indifferentia ad agere vel (et P) non agere; alia indifferentia est ad agere hoc vel illud; tertia est ad agere recte et agere non recte. Sed nec prima indifferentia nec secunda nec ambe simul faciunt difficultatem in potentia propter cuius ammotionem potentia requirit habitum virtuosum; nam prima indifferentia sufficienter tollitur per movens ad exercitium actus, secunda tollitur per obiectum quod determinat (determinatur P) ad actum circa ipsum (circa ipsum *om.* P). Et (sed P) sola indifferentia que est ad agere recte et (ad *add.* P) agere non recte tollitur per habitum virtutis et requirit habitum virtutis in potentia sic indifferente determinantem ad recte agere."

[72] Q. 6 *De malo* deals with the following problem: "utrum homo habeat liberam electionem suorum actuum aut ex necessitate eligat". Among Thomas's texts, it is probably the most influential of the discussions on free will by masters of theology at the end of 13th century and at the beginning of 14th; especially Henry of Ghent, Giles of Rome, Godfrey of Fontaines, and Thomas of Sutton.

[73] Thomas Aquinas, *Questiones disputatae de malo*, q. 6, ed. P.M. Gils in *S. Thomae de Aquino Opera Omnia*, vol. 23 (Rome: 1982), 148, lines 308–19: "Secundo considerandum est quod potentia aliqua dupliciter movetur: uno modo ex parte subiecti, alio modo ex parte obiecti. Ex parte subiecti quidem, sicut visus per immutationem dispositionis organi movetur ad clarius vel minus clare uidendum; ex parte vero obiecti sicut uisus nunc uidet album, nunc uidet nigrum. Et prima quidem immutatio pertinet ad ipsum exercitium actus, ut scilicet agatur uel non agatur, aut melius uel debilius agatur; secunda uero immutatio pertinet ad specificationem actus, nam actus specificatur per obiectum."

### *Voluntary Action*

Burley does not seem to be particularly interested in the problem of the structure of human acts (i.e. voluntary actions) and of free will. This fact is actually surprising, since the problem of moral responsibility had engaged Aristotle's commentators in difficult discussions. Thus Burley seems to ignore the whole post-Thomistic developments concerning the nature of free will, the relationship between the intellect and the will, and the supremacy of one of these two faculties on the other. He never refers to the principal post-Thomistic positions: neither to the intellectualist (the position of Godfrey and his fellows), nor to the voluntarist (the position of Henry and his fellows).

### *Heroic Virtue*

Concerning heroic virtue, Burley follows the explanation of the anonymous Greek commentator of Book VII (which he calls Eustratius). According to this commentator, heroic virtue is not a particular virtue; rather, every moral virtue taken in an exceptional degree is heroic virtue: there can be a heroic *temperantia*, a heroic *fortitudo*, and so on.[74] According to Burley, heroic virtue is not a particular species of virtue, but to every virtue, existing in his ordinary degree, can correspond the same virtue existing in an extraordinary degree (meaning that the degree of such a virtue is superior to the average status of virtue).[75]

Burley does not take into account Albert's and Thomas's position on heroic virtue;[76] nor does he takes into account the theory of Gerald of

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[74] Anon., *In Eth. Nic.* 7.1, in *The Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle in the Latin Translation of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln* (*† 1253*), vol. 3, *The Anonymous Commentator on Book VII, Aspasius on Book VIII, and Michael of Ephesus on Books IX and X*, ed. H.P.F. Mercken (Leiden: 1991), 3.

[75] *In Eth. Nic.* 7.1.1 (V fol. 145va; P fol. 104vb): "Secundo (est *add.* P) notandum circa virtutem heroicam quod ipsa non est specie distincta a virtutibus communiter dictis, scilicet a fortitudine, mansuetudine, temperantia et sic de aliis. Nam in specie cuiuslibet virtutis superexcellentia ultra (*om.* V) communem modum hominum est virtus heroica, quod patet hic per Eustratium dicentem quod si quis (aliquis P) fiat fortis super omnem fortem, eius fortitudo est fortitudo heroica et divina, et si aliquis fuerit (cum aliquis fit P) temperatus ultra (supra P) omnem temperatum, eius temperantia est temperantia heroica, et sic de aliis speciebus virtutis. Unde in qualibet specie virtutis moralis est reperire virtutem heroicam, ut liberalitatem heroicam, mansuetudinem heroicam et sic de aliis."

[76] See I. Costa, "Heroic Virtue in the Commentary Tradition on the *Nicomachean Ethics* in the Second Half of the Thirteenth Century," in *Virtue Ethics in the Middle Ages: Commentaries on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, 1200–1500*, ed. I. Bejczy (Leiden: 2007), 156–62.

Odo, according to which heroic virtue is a disposition of rational appetite, or will, and according to which human happiness consists in an act of heroic virtue.[77]

On the contrary, Burley refers to the preceding Latin tradition when he explains how heroic virtue and his opposite (i.e. brutishness) are possible. Burley makes use of the theory according to which man is an intermediate being (*medium*) between irrational animals and separated substances;[78] man is ontologically at the limit between material and spiritual realities, since body belongs to the former and soul to the latter; human virtue consists in a balance between these two aspects of human being, the material and the spiritual part; but this balance can sometimes be broken: thus man can either follow the spiritual nature and accomplish it so to equate separate substances; or he can follow the material nature and lower his being to the nature of irrational animals.[79]

Burley addresses a philosophically important question concerning heroic virtue: is it possible to recognize different degrees of perfection in heroic virtue?[80] Unfortunately, Burley does not try to answer this question either in Book VII or in the remaining parts of his commentary.

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[77] Guiral Ot, *In Eth. Nic.* 1.6, q. 21 (ed. Venice: 1500, fol. 14va): "Sed in oppositum est quia felicitas consistit in operatione virtutis heroice que in voluntate non in intellectu consistit: non enim fuit Hector multum excellens in scientiis, de quo tamen dicitur infra, libro VII: fuit puer heroicus" (see *Eth. Nic.* VII, 1, 1145 a 20–22). That heroic virtue is in the will is maintained by some 13th-century masters of arts in their commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, see Costa, "Heroic virtue," 166–71.

[78] On the sources of this theory, see Costa, "Heroic virtue."

[79] *In Eth. Nic.* 7.1.1 (V fol. 145va; P fol. 104vb): "Cum homo sit medium inter substantias separatas et animalia (alia V) bruta per intellectum communicans cum substantiis separatis et cum brutis in potentiis sensitivis, et medium inter aliqua aliqualiter attingit utrumque extremum (extremorum P), potest rationalis pars hominis perfici ultra communem modum humane perfectionis quasi in similitudine substantiarum separatarum, et huiusmodi perfectio vocatur virtus heroica, et dicitur heroica (et dicitur heroica *om.* P) ut solum heroibus, idest semidiis (-deis P), conveniens, ut dicit Eustratius, intelligens per semideos viros deo appropinquantes ultra communem modum hominum (*om.* P). Potest etiam anima humana, per hoc quod per partem sensitivam convenit cum brutis, attingere ad malitiam bruti, ut quando affectiones partis sensitive corrumpuntur in homine usque ad similitudinem bestiarum, et huiusmodi malitia vocatur bestialitas super incontinentiam et malitiam hominum sive (hominum sive *om.* P) humanam. Potest etiam anima humana medio modo se habere non declinando ad aliquod extremorum inter que est medium, et tunc quod est laudabile in homine medio modo se habente vocatur virtus, et fugiendum in homine sic se habente vocatur malitia et (etiam *add.* P) incontinentia."

[80] *In Eth. Nic.* 7.1.1 (V fol. 145va; P fol. 104vb): "Utrum autem virtus heroica manens heroica, aut bestialitas, habeat gradus demonstrantes secundum magis et minus vel sit supremus gradus sue speciei non determino ad presens."

## *Conclusions*

In conclusion, Burley's commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* is not a philosophically original work. Moreover, it is an "antiquated" commentary: faithfulness to Aquinas's commentary, not only in the *expositio littere*, but also in some main doctrinal problems, is dominant; consequently, Burley almost ignores the various post-Thomistic developments of the *scientia moralis*. On the basis of the sections that have been analyzed in the present study, and of the sources explicitly quoted by Burley, it seems that he has not made use of the *Ethics* commentary by Gerald of Odo: this does not mean that he had no access to this text; but, even if he knew it, indeed he did not discuss its most original and interesting aspects. It seems clear that Burley's intention has been to provide a purely philosophical commentary: theological problems are almost completely absent, and the *expositio littere* is the most developed part of the text.

CHAPTER TWELVE

# BURLEY'S COMMENTARY ON THE *POLITICS*: EXEGETIC TECHNIQUES AND POLITICAL LANGUAGE

Roberto Lambertini

Although known to scholars since the pioneering investigations by Cranz,[1] Burley's commentary on Aristotle's *Politics* never underwent a thorough, comprehensive analysis. The attention devoted to this late work of the famous English logician and philosopher has been, with the sole, partial exception of Lowrie J. Daly, mainly occasional.[2] This commentary was either mentioned in general surveys or was the object of articles published in miscellaneous volumes. Only a few passages from the commentary have been published, relying on a limited number of manuscripts. Such a state of affairs contrasts with the success enjoyed by the work itself in the 14th and 15th centuries. The most updated list of manuscripts, published in Christoph Flüeler's monograph about the reception of the *Politics* in the later Middle Ages, enumerates 36 extant copies, not to mention the manuscripts that are now lost, but are known to have existed.[3] Although it was never printed, Burley's commentary was handed down to us in many more copies than Albert's or Aquinas's commentaries on the same Aristotelian text. Nevertheless, modern scholars devoted much more attention, as is obvious, to the works of these latter authors. This apparent paradox cannot be completely explained by referring to the greater fame enjoyed by the two Dominican masters. It could also lie in the diverging expectations of the late medieval reader and of the contemporary historian of medieval political thought. Besides summarizing the results of contemporary scholarship, the present chapter will therefore focus on the features that might have attracted medieval readers, and on the peculiarities that can puzzle contemporary scholars, in order to show the importance of further study on this unedited work.

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[1] F. Edward Cranz, "Aristotelianism in Medieval Political Theory. A Study of the Reception of the Politics" (Dissertation, Harvard University: 1938).

[2] Lowrie J. Daly, "Walter Burley and John Wyclif on some Aspects of Kingship," in *Mélanges Eugène Tisserand*, vol. 4, part 1 (Vatican City: 1964), 163–84.

[3] Christoph Flüeler, *Rezeption und Interpretation der Aristotelischen Politica im späten Mittelalter*, vol. 2 (Amsterdam: 1992), 13–15. Flüeler improved Lohr's list published in Charles H. Lohr, "Medieval Latin Aristotle Commentaries. Authors G–I," *Traditio* 24 (1968), 149–245, in particular 186–87.

### *Results of Previous Scholarship*

In his *Sitzungsbericht* of 1941 Martin Grabmann mentioned Burley and published its dedication to Richard of Bury (beginning with the words *Reverendo in Christo*) transcribing it from the manuscript Munich, Clm 8402, along with the first lines of the commentary.[4] S. Harrison Thomson was the first, however, to attempt a comprehensive assessment of the commentary, providing a first list of manuscripts, and publishing a certain number of excerpts from the manuscript Oxford, Balliol College, 95.[5] The series of passages published by Thomson is opened by another dedication to Bury, beginning with the words *Ut dicit*, which is different in many respects from the one published by Grabmann. In 1947, Thomson was understandably not aware of Grabmann's contribution. On the basis of the *Ut dicit* dedication Thomson also outlined a first chronology of the commentary, which should be dated after the death (1339) of Richard of Bentworth, bishop of London, who, according to Burley himself, had asked him to write an *expositio* of the *Politics*, and before the demise of the actual dedicatee of the commentary, Richard of Bury (1345).[6] As far as Burley's method is concerned, Thomson notices that the plan, announced in the prologue, to provide the reader with aids such as lists of *questiones principales*, or of *propositiones*, is not carried out coherently in the whole book: some elements are lacking in some books, some others are added without being foreseen. According to him, this lack of uniformity could be traced back to an unfinished revision process. Furthermore, Thomson remarks that most of Burley's commentary consists in a clear, expanded paraphrase of Moerbeke's text, with very few personal additions. Thomson fails to identify Burley's sources other than the ones that are explicitly mentioned by the author, but is able to locate the two passages where Burley refers to the English political situation; in the first one, in fact, he speaks of the *parliamentum* as playing an important role in the decision-making

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[4] Martin Grabmann, "Die mittelalterliche Kommentare zur Politik des Aristoteles," (vorgetragen am 15. November 1941—Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Abteilung, Jahrgang 1941, II, Heft 40); now collected in *Gesammelte Akademieabhandlungen*, II, ed. Grabmann Institut der Universität München (Paderborn: 1979), 1725–1800, especially 1750–58 (I quote from this edition).

[5] S. Harrison Thomson, "Walter Burley's Commentary on the *Politics* of Aristotle," in *Mélanges Auguste Pelzer. Études d'histoire littéraire et doctrinale de la scholastique médiévale offertes à M. A. Pelzer* (Louvain: 1947), 557–78.

[6] About this highly educated bishop, bibliophile, and patron of many English theologians, see the still fundamental contribution in Beryl Smalley, *English Friars and Antiquity in the Early Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: 1960), 66–74.

process together with the king, in the second the *rex Anglorum* is explicitly mentioned as an ideal king, who is superior in virtue to all his subjects. Thanks to his superiority, which is acknowledged by everybody, every subject is happy with his position under the king and has the impression that they co-rule with him.[7] These two remarks, which will be referred to time and again in the following studies devoted to Burley's commentary, represent two of the few cases in which the author expresses his own opinion. A rather poor harvest indeed. Reacting in the same year to Thomson's paper, Anneliese Maier had little to add about the contents of the commentary, but had made an important discovery concerning the manuscript tradition: the MS Burghes. 129 of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana contains a copy of Burley's commentary which is dedicated to Clement VI.[8] Moreover, she could show that this manuscript is doubtless the very copy that Burley handed to the pope. In this way we become aware of the rather surprising fact that Burley dedicated the same work to two different personalities when they were still alive, a circumstance that throws light on the actual meaning of the dedications of works in the age of Scholasticism, as Jürgen Miethke has pointed out several times.[9] In addition to that, we possess a new *terminus ante quem* for the final redaction of the work: 23 November 1343, the date of the *epistula dedicatoria*.

When, in the 1960s, Lowrie Daly focused his attention on this commentary, he chose to rely on the manuscript discovered by Anneliese Maier. In 1964 he published in the *Mélanges Eugéne Tisserand* a comparison between Wyclif's and Burley's ideas about kingship. The choice of the two objects of comparison was not altogether fortunate, but Daly uses this opportunity to provide a scholarly audience with additional information: first and foremost, he shows that Burley heavily relied on Peter of Auvergne, that is, on his commentary on the *Politics*, covering, as is well known, Books III to VIII. In this way, he realizes that Burley's paraphrase of Aristotle is, in many cases indeed, a paraphrase of Peter's literal commentary.[10] Burley's opinions can emerge from time to time, in the form of even minimal shifts

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[7] Thomson, "Walter Burley," 577.

[8] Anneliese Maier, "Zu Walter Burleys Politik-Kommentar," *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale* 14 (1947), 332–36; then reprinted in Maier, *Ausgehendes Mittelalter* 1 (Rome: 1964), 93–99.

[9] For example in Jürgen Miethke, *Le teorie politiche del Medioevo* (Genoa: 2001), in particular 98; see also Miethke, *De potestate papae. Die päpstliche Amtskompetenz im Widerstreit der politischen Theorie von Thomas von Aquin bis Wilhelm von Ockham* (Tübingen: 2000), 152–57; 170–73.

[10] Daly, "Walter Burley and John Wyclif," 179.

from Auvergne's interpretation of Aristotle's text, or in the form of brief *notanda*, which are interspersed with great parsimony among long passages devoted to a clear rendering of the rather obscure Latin of Moerbeke's translation. Daly is able to highlight one of these rare manifestations of Burley's opinion when he notices that the English master, instead of expressing a preference for hereditary monarchy as Peter of Auvergne had done, maintains rather that each country should follow its tradition. Some years later, writing *Some Notes on Walter Burley's Commentary on the Politics* in a miscellany presented to Bertie Wilkinson, Daly reproduced almost verbatim a part of his own passages of the previous article, adding some information concerning Burley's use of lists of important issues discussed or touched upon by Aristotle.[11] Daly's interest in what he calls "teaching techniques" resulted in three articles published in *Manuscripta* between 1968 and 1971,[12] where he prints the list of *conclusiones* singled out by Burley in his exposition, be they actually listed separately, or only highlighted as such in the text. Indeed, it seems that even in the presentation copy for the pope, Burley—or the scribe in charge—could not achieve complete consistency in his apparatus of studying tools, so that some books are provided with lists of *questiones* and *conclusiones*, while others are not. Publishing the *conclusiones* of Book V and VI, Daly discovered that Burley inserts a *notandum* where he compares *principatus divinus* and *principatus politicus*; discussing this obviously non-Aristotelian issue, he supports the idea of the supremacy of the spiritual over the temporal power.[13] In almost the same years the versatile Italian scholar Mario Grignaschi had published once again the *Reverendo in Christo* prologue, on the basis of two manuscripts not used by the other scholars,[14] and the lines devoted to the definition of *civis* in Burley's commentary.[15] Some remarks on the difficulty of giving a univocal interpretation of Burley's statements concerning monarchy and parliament are contained in Jean Dunbabin's contribution

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[11] Lowrie J. Daly, "Some Notes on Walter Burley's Commentary on the Politics," in *Essays in Medieval History Presented to Bertie Wilkinson*, ed. T.A. Sandquist and M.R. Powicke (Toronto: 1969), 270–81.

[12] Lowrie J. Daly, "The Conclusions of Walter Burley's Commentary on the *Politics*, Books I to IV," *Manuscripta* 12 (1968), 79–92; Daly, "The Conclusions of Walter Burley's Commentary on the *Politics*. Books V and VI," *Manuscripta* 13 (1969), 142–49; Daly, "The Conclusions of Walter Burley's Commentary on the Politics, Books VII and VIII," *Manuscripta* 15 (1971), 13–22.

[13] Daly, "The Conclusions . . . Books V and VI," 149.

[14] Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, cl. VI, cod. 91 (3020); Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Chis., E.V. 164.

[15] Mario Grignaschi, "La definition du 'civis' dans la Scholastique," in *Gouvernés et Gouvernants*, part 3, Recueil de la société Jean Bodin 24 (Brussels: 1966), 71–100.

to the *Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*.[16] Disappointingly, only a few lines mention Burley in the *Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought*, which appeared some years later.[17]

At the beginning of the 1990s, then, Cary Nederman attempted to reconstruct Burley's "coherent vision" of politics from the few remarks scattered in the text,[18] arguing that it consists in employing the English experience of a "cooperation" between king and nobility as a hermeneutical key to interpret Aristotle's text. Focusing on Book III, and in particular on the two passages highlighted already by Thomson, Nederman suggests that a sort of co-rulership of the most important baronial families is Burley's solution to the problems raised by Aristotle's doctrine of kingship. Such a solution, moreover, is inspired by the English political situation of his times, where he sees the growing responsibility of Parliament in the government of the realm. To Nederman's remark one could add that, in this way, Burley follows the path of previous commentators of the *Politics*, who were inclined to interpret Aristotle's "aporetical" remarks about the superiority of a multitude vis-à-vis an individual monarch as an invitation to the king to associate counselors and experts with his court.[19] Like Thomson, Nederman relies on the Oxford MS Balliol College 95. In the same year, that is, in 1992, the second volume of Flüeler's *Rezeption und Interpretation der aristotelischen Politica* provided scholars with the most complete list of manuscripts of Burley's commentary; moreover, stressing the existence of three different dedicatory prologues, two of which mention Richard of Bury as the dedicatee, while the third one is directed to the pope, he suggested that the commentary was transmitted in different versions. Flüeler also discovered a fundamental change in Burley's attitude towards his main source, Peter of Auvergne, after Book VI; in the first six books, in fact, Burley uses the Aquinas–Auvergne commentary as

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[16] Jean Dunbabin, "The Reception and Interpretation of Aristotle's Politics," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought*, ed. Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny, and Jan Pinborg (Cambridge: 1982), 723–37, about Burley, see 729–30.

[17] Jean Dunbabin, "Government," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought, c.350–c.1450*, ed. James H. Burns (Cambridge: 1988), 477–519, the only lines devoted to Burley, except for bibliographical entries and a biographical sketch, are at 485–86.

[18] Cary J. Nederman, "Kings, Peers and Parliament: Virtue and Corulership in Walter Burley's Commentarius in VIII Libros Politicorum Aristotelis," originally *Albion* 24 (1992), 391–407, now in Nederman, *Political Aristotelianism and His Limits. Classical Traditions in Moral and Political Philosophy, 12th–15th Centurie*s (Aldershot: 1997), as n. xiv.

[19] This is the case for Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum*; see e.g. my "Philosophus videtur tangere tres rationes. Egidio Romano lettore ed interprete della Politica nel terzo libro del De regimine Principum," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 1 (1990), 277–325, in particular 307–13.

a hermeneutical tool, while from Book VII onwards he confines himself to copy, with minor modifications, Peter's text.[20]

After Flüeler's assessment of the manuscript tradition, any investigation aiming at a substantial improvement of our knowledge of this commentary of the English master should start from an in-depth analysis in order to ascertain the actual differences existing among the version, trying also to establish whether it is possible to reconstruct the different stages of redaction to which Burley himself makes reference in his dedicatory prologue beginning with the words *Ut dicit*.[21] To the best of my knowledge, nobody has accepted this difficult and time-consuming challenge, although many brilliant scholars also recently mentioned Burley in their studies about the reception of Aristotle's *Politics*.[22] The present chapter is also unable to fulfill such a task; it can aim, however, at showing why such a philological scrutiny could be worthwhile.

## *Burley's Exegetic Techniques*

Since the beginnings of the interest in Burley's commentary, scholars realized that the subdivision of the books into *tractatus* represented a peculiar feature of Burley's way of commenting on Aristotle's *Politics*. He himself is conscious of this novelty and describes it in both prologues addressed to Richard of Bury. Given the strategic role that the *divisio textus* plays in late medieval commentaries, it is worthwhile reading once again his words in the *Reverendo in Christo* prologue:[23]

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[20] Flüeler, *Rezeption und Interpretation*, 2, 20–21. A previous analysis of the last book of the commentary, contained in Max Haas, "Musik und Affekt im 14. Jahrhundert: Zum Politik-Kommentar Walter Burleys," *Schweizer Jahrbuch für Musikwissenschaft* 1 (1981), 9–22 is not available to me.

[21] Thomson, "Walter Burley's," 565: "exposicionem super 8 libros politicorum ad requisicionem domini Ricardi londoniensis episcopi inchoatam, quam cum novis addicionibus et tabula dictorum magistralium perfeccius et lucidius vestro nomini princpaliter dedciavi . . ."

[22] E.g. Ulrich Meier, *Mensch und Bürger. Die Stadt im Denken spätmittelalterlicher Theologen, Philosophen und Juristen* (Munich: 1994), in particular 67, 98, 104; David Luscombe, "Commentaries on the *Politics*: Paris and Oxford, XIII–XVth centuries," in *L'enseignement des disciplines à la Faculté des arts* (*Paris et Oxford, XIII^e–XV^e siècles*), ed. Olga Weijers and Louis Holtz (Turnhout: 1997), 313–27, particularly 318–19; Marco Toste, "Nobiles, Optimi viri, Philosophi. The Role of the Philosopher in the Political Community at the Faculty of Arts in Paris in the Late Thirteenth Century," in *Itinéraires de la raison. Études de philosophie médiévale offertes à Maria Cândida Pacheco*, ed. José F. Meirinhos (Louvain-la-Neuve: 2005), 269–308.

[23] I use Anneliese Maier's transcription, in Maier, "Zu Walter Burleys," 94–95; I collated it with the copy contained in Vatican City, Pal lat. 1030, fol. 22r, without finding any momentous variant.

> Requisivit me vestra paternitas reverenda ut librum politicorum Aristotelis explanarem, dividendo totum librum in libros partiales et quemlibet librum in tractatus et tractatus in capitula et capitula in partes et partes in particulas secundum diversitatem sententiae, secundum quod in libro Ethicorum et in aliis libris Aristotelis facere consuevi, ut sententia Aristotelis in dicto libro clarior et distinctior et evidentior habeatur.

Burley's emphasis on Aristotle's *sententia* emerges clearly from the preceding passage: the division into *tractatus* aims at a better rendering of the "intended meaning" of Aristotle's work.[24] The prologue *Ut dicit* tells a different, almost contradictory, story about the origin of the commentary: while according to *Reverendo in Domino*, Richard of Bury asked Burley to comment on the *Politics* following the same pattern used for the *Nicomachean Ethics*, according to *Ut dicit* Burley himself decided to dedicate to Bury, as a small sign of gratefulness, an exposition that he had already begun at the insistence of the bishop of London, completing it with new additions. Cranz suggested that *Reverendo in Christo* could be witness to a previous stage of the redaction;[25] as a matter of fact, at the present state of knowledge, it could be argued also in favor of the opposite chronological relation, arguing that in the second version of the dedicatory letter the memory of the late Bentworth was put aside and the role of the new patron was exalted. I do not think that this issue can be broached in the present chapter. At any rate, it is worth noting that *Ut dicit* also highlights the division in *tractatus* as a means of clarifying Aristotle's *sententia*, contrasting explicitly *sententia* and *littera*:[26]

> In exponendo vero textum dividam quemlibet librum in tractatus, et tractatus in capitula, et capitula in partes, et partes in particulas, faciendo istas divisiones secundum diversitatem sententie et non secundum quantitatem littere, quemadmodum plurimi diviserunt.

Parting company with previous commentators, Burley disregards *littera* (in this context the actual length of the textual portion in the original),

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[24] For the meaning of the term "sententia" in this context, see Francesco Del Punta, "The Genre of Commentaries in the Middle Ages and its Relation to the Nature and Originality of Medieval Thought," in *Was ist Philosophie im Mittelalter*, Akten des X. Internationalen Kongresses für mittelalterliche Philosophie der Societé Internationale pour l'Étude de la Philosophie médiévale 25. bis 30. August 1997 in Erfurt, ed. Jan A. Aertsen and Andreas Speer (Berlin: 1998), 138–51, in particular 146–47; see also O. Weijers, "La structure des commentaires philosophiques à la Faculté des Arts: quelques observations," in *Il commento filosofico nell'Occidente latino* (*secoli XIII–XV*)—Atti del Colloquio Firenze-Pisa, 19–22 ottobre 2000, organizzato dalla SISMEL e dalla SISPM sotto l'egida della SIEPM, ed. G. Fioravanti, C. Leonardi, and S Perfetti (Turnhout: 2002), 17–41.

[25] Cranz, *Aristotelianism*, 185–86.

[26] I quote from Thomson's transcription, in Thomson, "Walter Burley's," 566.

favoring a more functional way of rendering the philosophical content of Aristotle's work. Even a first glance at the structure of Book III of the *Politics*, which has always attracted scholars' attention,[27] can show the results of Burley's approach, especially when compared with the most influential earlier commentaries:

| Albert the Great[28] | Thomas Aquinas[29] | Peter of Auvergne[30] | Walter Burley |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cap. I<br>Ei qui de politia considerat (1274b32)[31] | Cap. I<br>Ei qui de politia considerat | Cap. I<br>Ei autem qui de politia etc. | Tractatus I<br>Cap. I<br>Ei qui de politia considerat[32] |
| | Cap. II<br>Sed forte illi magis (1275b34) | Cap. II<br>Sed forte illi | |

[27] The reasons behind the interest in the commentary on Book III are almost obvious, since it contains Aristotle's definition of citizen, his classification of constitutions, and his analysis of the various forms of kingship. As a consequence, we are relatively better informed about it than about the others.

[28] As Borgnet's edition is not available to me, henceforth I will refer to Albertus Magnus, *In libros Politicorum Commentarii*, ed. P. Jammy (Lugduni: 1651); commentary on Book III is at 128–98. Although the issue is far from being settled, I am inclined to think that Albert's commentary antedates Aquinas's *Sententia*. For some good arguments in favor of this opinion, see Francis Cheneval, "Considérations presque philosophiques sur les commentaires de la Politique d'Albert le Grand et de Thomas d'Aquin," *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 45 (1998), 56–83.

[29] Aquinas's fragmentary commentary on Book III of the *Politics* is quoted according to the critical edition inserted in the Editio leonina. Thomas de Aquino, *Sententia libri Politicorum*, III, in *Opera Omnia iussu Leonis XIII edita*, XLVIII A (Rome: 1971), 185–205.

[30] The first six chapters of this commentary are edited in Gundisalvus M. Grech, *The Commentary of Peter of Auvergne on Aristotle's Politics* (Rome: 1967), 73–129. The following chapters can be read in S. Thomae Aquinatis, *In libros Politicorum Aristotelis expositio*, ed. Raimondo M. Spiazzi (Turin: 1951), at 141–85. Spiazzi's text is far from being reliable, Grech's edition can be substantially improved; therefore, I use Lidia Lanza's provisional text, which is the first outcome of her project of a critical edition she is on working at the University of Fribourg under the supervision of Christoph Flüeler. I have access to this text thanks to Lidia Lanza's kindness and generosity, to whom I feel deeply indebted. For the reader's sake, however, I add also references to Spiazzi's and Grech's editions.

[31] In the absence of a critical edition of Moerbeke's translation of the *Politics*, Bekker's numeration is very useful to gain an idea of the length of chapters in the different commentaries; the most reliable edition of the Latin translation remains *Aristotelis Politicorum libri octo. Cum vetusta translatione Guilelmi de Moerbeka*, ed. Franz Susemihl (Leipzig: 1872).

[32] For the unedited parts of Burley's commentary, which I call *Expositio* because this is the term used by the author in the *Ut dicit* prologue, I use the codex that is thought to be the presentation copy, namely MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Burghes. 129; the beginning of Book III is at fol. 33ra.

(*cont.*)

| Albert the Great | Thomas Aquinas | Peter of Auvergne | Walter Burley |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cap. II<br>His autem que dicta sunt, habitum est considerare (1276b16) | Cap. III<br>Hiis autem que dicta sunt | Cap. III<br>Hiis autem que dicta sunt | Cap. II (primi tractatus)<br>His autem que dicta sunt[33] |
| Cap. III<br>Circa ciuem autem adhuc restat quaedam dubitatio (1277b33) | Cap. IV<br>Circa ciuem autem etc. | Cap. IV<br>Circa ciuem autem etc. | |
| Cap. IV<br>Quoniam autem haec determinata sunt[34]<br>( 1278b6) | Cap. V<br>Quoniam autem hec determinata sunt | Cap. V<br>Quoniam autem | Tractatus II<br>Cap. I<br>Quoniam autem hec[35] |
| Cap. V<br>Determinatis autem hiis, habitum est (1279a22) | Cap. VI<br>Determinatis autem hiis | Cap. VI<br>Determinatis autem hiis | Cap. II (secundi tractatus)<br>Determinatis autem hiis[36] |
| Cap. VI<br>Sumendum autem prius quos terminos dicunt (1280a7) | | Cap. VII<br>Sumendum autem | |
| Cap. VII<br>Habet autem dubitationem quid oportet (1281a11) | | Cap. VIII<br>Habet autem dubitationem | Cap. III (secundi tractatus)<br>Habet autem dubitationem[37] |
| | | Cap. IX<br>Propter quod et prius (1281b21) | |

[33] Burley, *Expositio*, fol. 35rb.

[34] Albert the Great, *Commentarius*, l. III, cap. 4, ed. Jammy, 147: "Hic incipit tractare de politiis, et est secunda pars libri, quae habet tres partes."

[35] Burley, *Expositio*, fol. 36va.

[36] Ibid., fol. 37vb.

[37] Ibid., fol. 39va.

(*cont.*)

| Albert the Great | Thomas Aquinas | Peter of Auvergne | Walter Burley |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cap. VIII<br>Quoniam autem in omnibus quidem scientiis (1282b14) | | Cap. X<br>Quoniam autem | Cap. IV (secundi tractatus)<br>Quoniam autem in omnibus[38] |
| | | Cap. XI<br>Sed ex quibus ciuitas consistit (1283a14) | |
| | | Cap. XII<br>Propter quod et ad dubitationem (1283b35) | |
| Cap. IX<br>Forte autem bene habet[39] (1284b35) | | Cap. XIII<br>Forte autem | Tractatus III<br>Cap. I<br>Forte autem bene habet[40] |
| Cap. X<br>Principium autem inquisitionis (1286a7) | | Cap. XIV<br>Principium autem inquisitionis | Cap. II (tertii tractatus), principium autem inquisitionis[41] |
| | | Cap. XV<br>De rege autem qui secundum suam (1287a1) | |
| | | Cap. XVI<br>Sed forte hec (1287b36) | Cap. III (tertii tractatus)<br>Sed forte hec[42] |

[38] Ibid., fol. 41rb.

[39] Albert the Great, *Commentarius*, l. III, cap. 9, ed. Jammy, 182: "Postquam Aristoteles determinavit de politiis in communi, determinat de eis in speciali, et primo de regno quod dicit esse optimam."

[40] Burley, *Expositio*, fol. 44va.

[41] Ibid., fol. 45va.

[42] Ibid., fol. 48ra.

As one can easily see, Burley's reader is made acquainted with a threefold structure of the book, which deals first with the concepts of citizen and city, second with constitutions in general, and third with king and kingship. This facilitates a quick grasp of the contents of the book, especially in comparison with a division in 16 chapters (Peter of Auvergne) or in ten (Albert the Great); this does not mean, however, that Burley neglects the previous tradition: not only does his *tractatus* begin at the same point of the text identified as such by Albert and Peter, but also his further subdivisions in chapters use many of the *lemmata* that had been singled out as marking parts of the text. To sum up, Burley reshapes the results of previous *divisiones textus* for the sake of a better understanding of the whole. A comparison between the opening lines of the commentary on the third book can show Burley's achievements from this point of view:

| Peter of Auvergne | Walter Burley |
|---|---|
| *Ei autem qui de politia* etc. Postquam Philosophus pertransiuit opiniones antiquorum de politia reprobando eas quantum ad male dicta, approbando autem quantum ad bene dicta, in isto tertio libro prosequitur secundum intentionem suam de ipsa. Et diuiditur in duas partes. Primo enim dat ordinem et modum procedendi. Secundo prosequitur, ibi *Eos quidem igitur*. Prima in duas. Primo probat quod debentem considerare de politia oportet considerare de ciuitate prius. Secundo ostendit quod debentem considerare de ciuitate, oportet considerare de ciue, ibi *Quoniam autem ciuitas*. Prima in duas, secundum quod probat primum per duas rationes. Secunda ibi *Politici autem*. In prima dicit quod debentem considerare de politia qualibet secundum rationem, puta quid est, scilicet secundum genus, et qualis, scilicet secundum differentiam, utrum bona uel iusta siue recta, oportet considerare de ciuitate.[43] | *Ei qui de politia*. Iste liber tertius, qui specialiter et principaliter est de regno et rege, continet tres tractatus. In primo determinat de civitate et cive. In secundo ibi: *Quoniam autem haec determinata sunt*, determinat de politiis et principatibus in generali. In tertio ibi: *Forte autem bene habet*, determinat specialiter de rege et regno. Tractatus primus continet duo capitula, in quorum primo ostenditur quid est civis et quid civitas et a quo habet civitas unitatem; in secundo capitulo ibi: *his autem que dicta sunt habitum est*, movetur et solvitur quedam questio circa virtutem civis: *an sit eadem virtus boni viri et civis studiosi*. Capitulum primum continet quinque partes. In prima ostendit hic esse determinandum de civitate et cive et ordinem determinandi de hiis. In secunda ibi: *eos quidem* ostendit de quo cive hic intendit. In tertia parte ibi: *civis autem simpliciter* ponitur definitio civis simpliciter et etiam civitatis. |

[43] Cf. Peter of Auvergne, *Scriptum super librum Politicorum*, ed. Grech, 73–74.

(*cont.*)

| Peter of Auvergne | Walter Burley |
|---|---|
| | In quarta parte ibi: *determinant autem*, removet unam falsam opinionem circa quidditatem civis. In quinta parte ibi: *dubitantur quidem* movetur et solvitur quedam dubitatio circa unitatem ci//f. 33rb//vitatis. Prima pars continet duas particulas. In prima narrat quod volenti considerare de politia primo oportet scire et considerare quid est civitas In secunda particula ibi: *Quoniam autem civitas* ostendit ordinem considerandi de civitate et cive, qui est prius est determinandum de cive quam de civitate. In prima ostendit Philosophus inquirendum esse quid est civitas et quid est civis, et continet duas particulas. In prima narrat quod volenti considerare de politia primo est ostendendum quid est civitas. In secunda particula, ibi: *quoniam autem ciuitas*, ostendit quod prius est determinandum de cive quam de ciuitate.[44] |

In the prologue *Ut dicit* Burley adds that he has distinguished, where necessary, between three kinds of parts: *inquisitiva*, *narrativa*, and *declarativa*, because not every statement in the *Politics* expresses the standpoint of the Philosopher. Very often some claims are formulated for the sake of discussion, and in order to confute them. To describe this state of affairs, Burley says that not every sentence is *autentica*, and therefore he will highlight what can be quoted as Aristotle's own authoritative opinion and what cannot:[45]

> Et quia Philosophus quandoque procedit dubitando, quandoque narrando et quandoque declarando, distinguam capitula ubi opus est in partem inquisitivam, narrativam et declarativam, ut per hoc poterit sciri quod dictum Aristotelis debet allegari aut recipi tamquam textum. Non enim quodlibet dictum Aristotelis in libris suis est autenticum. Que enim in dubitacionibus dicuntur non dicuntur semper ex intencione. Unde quod dicitur in parte declarativa aut narrativa tamquam autenticum est tenendum.

[44] Burley, *Expositio*, III, tr. 1, cap. 1, fol. 33ra–b.
[45] From Thomson, "Walter Burley's," 566.

Taking another example from Book III, in the fourth chapter of the second *tractatus*, and more specifically in the first *particula* of the third part of this chapter, Burley underlines that Aristotle, after confuting the opinion of the ancient, will "declare" the principle that the ruling positions should not be distributed according to excellence in any quality an individual can possess, but only according to excellence in qualities that are pertinent to politics.[46] In the third *tractatus* (Chapter II, pars 2, Part 3) he identifies the passage beginning with *quoniam autem evenit* as a *pars narrativa*.[47] Towards the end of the same book (tract. III, cap. III, pars), according to Burley the Philosopher "narrat" the way in which an individual can reign over others.[48] Needless to say, Burley is also very careful in adapting Aristotle's "aporetical" way of arguing to the form of the medieval *quaestio*, distinguishing between *argumenta pro* and *contra*.[49] The text quoted in the footnote speaks of a *quaestio principalis* that is discussed by Aristotle: as a matter of fact, in the prologue *Ut dicit* Burley declares his intention to list, at the beginning of each book, the *questiones* broached and solved in it. Although he is not always consistent with this intention, in Book III he actually lists some questions, referring to the portion of the text where they are discussed, and anticipating Aristotle's solution. It is not surprising that such a list shows many affinities with the questions-lists from commentaries *per quaestiones*, although Burley tends to be more selective and to confine himself to some core issues debated in the book. Although limited to Book III, in the following synopsis—where the term of comparison is one of the most influential *quaestiones*-commentaries, that of Peter of Auvergne—shows affinities and divergence. One notices that Peter poses more questions (27 instead of 17), but often Burley formulates them in a broader way, so that one *quaestio* of his list can correspond to more items in Peter of Auvergne.

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[46] Burley, *Expositio*, III, tr. 2, cap. 4, pars 3, part 1, fol. 41va: "*At vero si hoc verum erit.* Hec est tertia particula prime partis, in qua improbat istam opinionem antiquorum declarando quod non secundum cuiuslibet boni excessum debent principatus distribui."

[47] Burley, *Expositio*, III, tr. 3, cap. 2, pars 2, part 3, fol. 45vb: "*Quoniam autem evenit*. Hec est tertia pars, que est narrativa, in qua narrat . . ."

[48] Burley, *Expositio*, III, tr. 3, cap. 3, fol. 48ra: "*Quoniam autem tres*, ostendit quod eadem est virtus et disciplina regis optimi et aristocratici et politici. In prima autem parte narrando dicit . . ."

[49] Burley, *Expositio*, III, tr. 3, cap. 2, pars 1, fol. 45rb–va: "In prima particula movet Philosophus questionem principalem huius tertii et disputat ad utramque partem. Questio principalis quam movet est ista: utrum melius est civitatem regi ab optimo viro ut ab optimo rege vel ab optimis legibus . . . *Valentius autem*. Hec est secunda particula prime partis, in qua arguit ad aliam partem probando quod melius est regi ab optimis legibus."

| Peter of Auvergne[50] | Walter Burley[51] |
|---|---|
| Utrum considerantem de policia oportet considerare prius de civitate | quid est civis |
| Utrum considerantem civitatem oportet prius considerare de cive | quid est civitas |
| Utrum sit civis simpliciter, qui potest partecipare principatu consiliativo et iudicativo | |
| Utrum civis unius racionis sit in omni policia | |
| Utrum civitas a principio usque ad finem maneat eadem numero. | a quo civitas est una |
| Utum civis inquantum huiusmodi per se sit aliqua virtus | |
| Utrum civis sit una virtus secundum omnem politiam | |
| Utrum civis studiosi et viri optimi sit eadem virtus | Utrum sit eadem virtus boni viri et civis studiosi |
| | Utrum principantis et subiecti sunt virtutes diverse secundum speciem |
| Utrum principans in principatu dispotico intendat bonum commune | |
| Utrum principans in principatu yconomico intendat bonum subditorum | |
| Utrum politie distinguantur secundum distinctionem finis | Que sunt per se differentie politie democratice et oligarche, utrum multitudo et paucitas vel diuitie et paupertas |
| Utrum secundum distinctionem principantium conveniat policias distingui | |
| Utrum politie sint multe | Quid est illud ex quo sumitur iustum simpliciter in politia vel civitate |
| Utrum homines ut in pluribus sint pravi iudices de se ipsis | |

[50] This list is taken from Flüeler, *Rezeption und Interpretation*, 2, 107–09. Marco Toste will soon publish a critical edition of this *quaestiones*-commentary.

[51] Burley, *Expositio*, III, fol. 32rb–ra.

(*cont.*)

| Peter of Auvergne | Walter Burley |
|---|---|
| Utrum melius sit principari paucos virtuosos vel multitudinem in civitate | Quid debet rationabiliter esse dominans in civitate: utrum multitudo vel unus |
| Utrum oportet multitudinem principari principatu maximo in civitate bene ordinata | |
| Utrum civitati expediat multitudinem eligere et corrigere principem | |
| Utrum principatus debeat distribui secundum dignitatem et excellentiam diviciarum | Secundum cuius boni excessum debent distribui principatus |
| Utrum in distributione principatus debeat attendi ad excellentiam ingenuitatis | |
| Utrum distribuendus sit principatus secundum excellentiam potentie | |
| | Utrum legislator inferendo rectissimas leges debet plus attendere ad conferens melioribus vel ad conferens toti multitudini |
| Utrum aliquis excedens alios in aliquo bono sit ponendus esse non civis | Utrum excedens sine comparatione omnes alios in potentia et virtute debeat principari |
| | Utrum in optima politia sine comparatione excedens alios in virtute debeat expelli vel relegari |
| | Utrum universaliter expediat civitati et regno regi a rege vel non |
| Utrum melius sit civitatem regi optimo viro vel optimis legibus | Utrum melius sit regi ab optimo rege vel ab optimis legibus |
| Queritur de sufficientia modorum regni | |
| Utrum, in quibus lex non determinat, melius sit civitatem regi pluribus vel uno | Utrum melius sit quod plures principentur vel unus solus |
| Utrum melius sit regem vel principem assumi per generationem vel electionem | Utrum melius sit habere regem secundum successionem hereditariam vel secundum electionem |
| Utrum melius sit civitatem regi uno vel pluribus | Utrum oportet regem habere robur et potentiam ad puniendum inobedientes et malos |

Along with *questiones principales*, the reader finds, mostly at the end of the books, as Burley promises in the prologue, lists of *propositiones notabiliores* concerning matters that are often topics of conversation among people, as an aid for memory. It is noteworthy that such *propositiones* are not the same as the *conclusiones* studied and published by Daly,[52] so that the reader is also provided with a rich set of memory aids of the kind investigated by Jacqueline Hamesse in many articles.[53]

In the dedicatory letter to the pope, however, referring to both his commentaries (on the *Ethics* and the *Politics*), Burley stresses his hermeneutical efforts in a different way, emphasizing that he has not only solved questions and doubts that one could raise about the text, but also that he has "reduced" Aristotle's text to *conclusiones sillogistice certae*.[54] It would be superfluous to refer to many passages where the English master makes explicit the syllogistic structure to Aristotle's reasoning, or even imposes a syllogistic pattern to it. One passage, however, where I emphasized the use of technical terms in the logic of consequences, can be usefully compared with the parallel commentary by Peter of Auvergne.

| Aristotle, III, 1283a3–10[55] | Peter of Auvergne[56] | Walter Burley[57] |
|---|---|---|
| Adhuc secundum hanc rationem omne bonum ad omne utique erit comparabile; si enim magis aliqua magnitudo, et totaliter utique magnitudo adaequabilis erit et ad divitias et ad libertatem; quare si plus hic differat secundum | Deinde cum dicit *Adhuc secundum* hanc, ponit tertiam rationem. Et est ducens ad impossibile. Et dividitur in duas. In prima ponit rationem. Secundo destruit consequens quod sequitur, ibi *Quoniam autem impossibile*. In prima | *Adhuc secundum hanc rationem* Tertio probatur conclusio sic: si secundum excessum cuiuslibet boni essent principatus distribuendi, tunc omne bonum omni bono esset comparabile secundum magis et minus, vel secundum |

[52] See above, footnote 12.

[53] Among the many publications devoted by Jacqueline Hamesse to this topic see "A propos de quelques techniques d'interpretation et de compilation des Textes. Paraphrases, Florilège et compendia," in *Itinéraires de la raison*, 11–34. On p. 31 Hamesse mentions Burley's commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, where he employs the same techniques as in the commentary on the *Politic*s.

[54] I quote Anneliese Maier's transcription, in "Zu Walter Burleys," 95: "Conatus sum exponere praedictos duos libros, secundum quod Dominus mihi ministravit, dicta Aristotelis in eisdem libris ad conclusiones certas sillogistice reducendo."

[55] Aristotle, *Politica*, III, ed. cit., 201.

[56] Peter of Auvergne, *Scriptum*, l. III, cap. 10—cf. ed. Spiazzi, 157.

[57] Burley, *Expositio*, III, tr. 3, cap. 4, pars 1, part 3, fols. 41vb–42ra.

(*cont.*)

| Aristotle, III, 1283a3–10 | Peter of Auvergne | Walter Burley |
|---|---|---|
| magnitudinem quam hic secundum virtutem et amplior virtutis magnitudo totaliter excedit, erunt utique comparabilia omnia; tanta enim magnitudo si valentior tanta, tanta palam quod aequalis; quoniam autem hoc impossibile . . . | dicit quod si distributio principatus fiat secundum excessum cuiuslibet boni, tunc omne bonum erit ad omne bonum comparabile, et secundum magis et minus, et secundum equale. Sed hoc est falsum, quare et primum. Quod autem ita sit declarat Philosophus. Quod vero omne bonum sit ad omne comparabile secundum magis et minus, si distributio principatus fiat secundum excessum cuiuslibet boni, hoc manifestum est; et ideo Philosophus hoc non declarat, sed quod sit comparabile secundum equale. Si enim sint duo, et unus excedat alium in nobilitate et pulchritudine, manifestum quod sunt comparabilia secundum magis et minus. Similiter secundum equale, quia si ab eo quod excedit alium auferatur illud in quo excedit, manifestum quod residuum erit equale. Si enim aliqua magnitudo sit maior altera, si auferatur ab ea in quo excedit alteram, totaliter erit equalis ei. Eodem modo est considerando ad divitias et ad libertatem: si enim aliquis excedat alium in nobilitate et divitiis et libertate, si amoveatur illud in quo excedit, manifestum quod erit equalis. | equale, quia omne bonum alteri comparatum esset magis bonum illo, vel minus bonum, vel equale. Sed hoc consequens est falsum, scilicet quod omne bonum est omni bono comparabile secundum magis et minus vel equale. Quod probatur, quia si omne bonum est omni bono comparabile secundum magis et minus, sequitur quod omne bonum est omni bono comparabile secundum equale; consequens est falsum, ergo hec est falsa: omne bonum est omni bono comparabile secundum magis et minus vel secundum equale, quia secunda pars est falsa et prima pars disiunctive, que est antecedens, infert secundam, ergo utraque pars prime disiunctive, que est consequens, est falsa. Quod autem sequatur "omne bonum est omni bono comparabile secundum magis et minus, ergo omne bonum est omni bono comparabile secundum equale" probat Philosophus sic: si quecumque duo bona comparentur ad invicem secundum magis et minus, si ab eo quod excedit abscindatur eccessus, scilicet illud in quo excedit, residua erunt equalia. Ut quia 10 excedunt 8 in duobus, ideo si a 10 abscindantur 2, |

(*cont.*)

| Aristotle, III, 1283a3–10 | Peter of Auvergne | Walter Burley |
|---|---|---|
| | Et ex hoc manifestum est quod, si isti duo sic se habeant quod magnitudo boni unius plus excedat virtutem alterius quam alius secundum virtutem, si addamus virtutem ampliorem, manifestum quod iste excedet in virtute. Quare manifestum est quod omnia bona ad omnia sunt comparabilia, et secundum magis, et secundum minus, et secundum equale. Si enim tanta magnitudo sit maior altera, amoto illo in quo excedit, residuum erit equale.<br>Deinde cum dicit *Quoniam autem*. Destruit consequens. Et dicit quod hoc est impossibile, scilicet, quod omnia bona sint comparabilia secundum equale, et magis et minus. Et ratio huius est quia comparabilia oportet esse unius speciei, sicut dicitur septimo *Physicorum*. | residua sunt equalia, scilicet 8 //42ra// et 8. Et sic patet quod omnia comparabilia secundum magis et minus possunt fieri comparabilia secundum equale. Et sic patet quod hec consequentia: "omne bonum est omni bono comparabile secundum magis et minus, ergo secundum equale" <tenet>. Et falsitas huius consequentis, scilicet quod omne bonum est omni bono comparabile secundum magis et minus, ergo secundum equale, probatur sic: omnia comparabilia sunt eiusdem speciei, ut patet ex septimo *Physicorum*. |

The preceding example shows how elaborate the explanation of a passage from the *Politics* could become. Burley undoubtedly draws inspiration from Peter, as many clues (including the same reference to the *Physics*) suggest, but he develops the logical analysis further.

To reach his aim, however, Burley also put some limits to his hermeneutical enterprise. First of all, as the prologue *Reverendo in Christo* explains in detail, he not only abstained from a new translation from the Greek (which had seemingly been requested by his patron), but also from commenting on Aristotle's historical examples. He justifies himself by admitting his ignorance of the Greek and leaving this task to Bury himself, whose

linguistic knowledge he praises.[58] In a passage quoted by Cary Nederman, he also remarks that the proper function of examples is nullified when they refer to situations that are unknown to the reader.[59] References to Greek culture and Greek history are therefore reduced to the minimum. A comparison of the ways Peter of Auvergne and Walter Burley comment on the passage where Aristotle makes reference to the myth of the Argonauts is particularly telling.

| Aristotle, III, 1284a22–25[60] | Peter of Auvergne[61] | Walter Burley[62] |
|---|---|---|
| fabulatur autem et Argonautas Heracleam dereliquisse propter talem causam: non enim voluisse ipsum ducere Argo [id est navem] cum aliis tamquam excedentem multum nautas. | Deinde, cum dicit *Fabulatur autem*, declarat hoc idem per tertium. Et dicit quod narratur quod quidam naute, dicti Argonaute ab Argo, id est navi, noluerunt recipere unum alium dictum Eracleam propter consimilem causam. Iste enim Eracleas multum excedebat Argonautas in arte navigandi. | Item, probatur per hoc quod fabulatur quosdam nautas noluisse recipere quemdam, immo ipsum recusabant, eo quod nimis excedebat eos in illa arte. |

It is therefore not surprising that one of the usual components of the medieval commentary, that is, the *expositio textus*, is almost completely missing in Burley's commentary, as a consequence of a hermeneutical approach that privileges a clear account of the basic tenets and of the main arguments. In this highly selective approach, some peculiarities of

[58] Quoting from Anneliese Maier, "Zu Walter Burleys," 95: "Vestris igitur precibus, quae mihi sunt pracepta, prout teneor in omnibus condescendendo. Hoc dumtaxat excepto, quia non sermones graecos interpretabor nec exponam, quia illius linguae sum totaliter ignarus. Sed discretioni vestrae, quae sufficienter in isto idiomate est instructa, expositionem verborum graecorum et explanationem historiarum, quae pro exemplis in pluribus libri praedicti locis ponuntur, decrevi relinquendas." On Bury's acquaintance with Greek, see Smalley, *English Friars*, 66–74.

[59] Nederman, "Kings, Peers," 394: "Tamen quia exempla de factis Graecorum et nationum remotarum non sunt nobis nota, et exempla ponimus propter noticiam habendam, non curamus ponere exempla sua per quae non poterimus melius cognitionem habere."

[60] Aristoteles, *Politica*, III, ed. cit., 209.

[61] Peter of Auvergne, *Scriptum*, l. III, cap. 12; cf. ed. Spiazzi, 165.

[62] Burley, *Expositio*, III, tr. 2, cap. 4, pars 4, fol. 43va.

the original text by Aristotle are almost completely ignored, while entire passages are not even taken into consideration. In this way, Burley provides his reader with a text that, although containing a careful *divisio*, could potentially also be read without having recourse to the original of the Latin translation.

### *A Study Tool*

From this point of view, one should at least raise some doubts concerning the actual origin of such a work in the teaching praxis. Some specialists, such as Grabmann and Daly, seem to take for granted that Burley's commentary resulted from a course; Grabmann speaks of a "für die Zwecke der Schule geschriebene Auslegung",[63] while one of the paragraphs in Daly's article bears the title "teaching techniques".[64] As a matter of fact, however, many elements could suggest a different interpretation. As already remarked, the absence of a systematic treatment of the *expositio textus* is not likely in the context of an actual teaching activity; no passage seems to hint at a "classroom situation". Furthermore, it is difficult to figure out in which institutional context a master of theology in his advanced years could have delivered a course on the *Politics* even though we know that in the same years he held a dispute on philosophical issues while spending some time in Bologna.[65] Thirdly, none of the prologues handed down to us makes reference to a teaching activity, while the witness of the few examples inserted in the text is far from univocal. As a matter fact, in her article on the reception of the *Politics*, Jean Dunbabin claims that his examples made clear that Burley thought of an audience of English students.[66] This might be the case for the frequently quoted reference to the English king, but at the beginning of the same Book III, in a passage discussing the problem of the identity of a city—published some years ago by the late Grignaschi—we find reference not only to France and to Paris, but even to the rivers Seine and Loire, which is surprising in an English

[63] Grabmann, "Die mittelalterlichen Kommentare," 1748.
[64] Daly, "Some Notes," 276.
[65] Jennifer Ottman and Rega Wood, "Walter of Burley: His Life and Works," *Vivarium* 37 (1999), 1–23, particularly 19–23.
[66] Dunbabin, "The Reception and Interpretation," 729: "A condensed summary of this sort must surely have been a handbook for students; that they were mainly English students is made plain by the examples."

milieu.[67] The same names appear in different manuscripts, bearing different prologues, so that the presence of French geography instead of the English one cannot be traced back to the initiative of a French scribe, but seems to belong to the core of the manuscript tradition.[68] Lacking a critical overview of all the manuscript witnesses, it is impossible, at present, to go beyond hypotheses. Although we are not entitled to rule out the possibility that Burley, who had been master of theology in Paris, indulged in a sort of xenomania, one could suspect that, as he attests for his commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*,[69] it existed in an earlier draft of the work (or a part thereof), dating back to a period time of Burley's biography,[70] when a reference to Paris rather than to London would have been much more obvious.

Leaving such speculations to the future, when more information about the textual tradition is available, the evidence collected so far strongly suggests that Burley succeeded in writing a highly appreciated commentary on the *Politics*, which, rather than being developed from the teaching praxis,[71] was thought of as a study tool, offering a facilitated access more to Aristotle's ideas expressed in the *Politics* than to the text itself. He pursued his goal leaving aside useless references to a history and a culture almost unknown even to the learned public of his time, casting Aristotle's intricate way of arguing in the more familiar framework of medieval syllogistic and theory of consequences, providing the reader with memory aids. To a certain extent, one could compare the function of Burley's commentary to the role played by Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum*, which at an earlier stage of the reception of Aristotle's moral philosophy as a whole, served also as a study tool, which could even take the place

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[67] Grignaschi, "La 'definition'," 91–2: "Nec ad unitatem civitatis sufficit unitas specifica specierum pollicie, quia sic due civitates, quarum una esset in Grecia et alia in Francia… Unde fluvius qui currit nunc Parisius et qui pridie ibidem currebat, non est idem numero simpliciter. Magis tamen est unus et idem quam sit idem cum fluvio Secane vel Ligris. Et si dicatur quod secundum hoc tu non fuisti bis Parisius…"

[68] Besides the manuscripts used by Grignaschi, the same examples can be found in Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Borghes., 129, fols. 34vb35–ra and Pal. lat., 1030, fol. 41v.

[69] Conor Martin, "Walter Burley," in *Oxford Studies Presented to Daniel Callus* (Oxford: 1964), 194–230, particularly 219–20.

[70] Burley left Paris towards the end of 1326; in addition to Conor Martin's article, which remains a landmark, see also Ottman and Wood, "Walter of Burley," 1–23.

[71] At present I am aware of only one colophon that uses the expression "*lectura*"; the manuscript (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, fol. 605), is a later one, dating back to the middle of the 15th century (cf. Flüeler, *Rezeption und Interpretation*, II, 13).

of direct knowledge of the circulating Latin translation, as Concetta Luna and Charles Briggs have already shown.[72]

The success that Burley undoubtedly scored in the late Middle Ages with this commentary (even more than with his commentary on the *Ethics*),[73] could be explained by the fact that he produced a practical, very useful tool, that met the needs of a relatively vast readership. From this point of view, Bishop Bentworth played the role of the spokesman of a wider public.[74] In fact, this commentary not only survives in many manuscript copies, but is also known to have exerted an influence not only on later commentators, such as Raimundus Acgerii and others,[75] but also on *compendia*.[76]

## Notandum est: *Between Exegesis and Originality*

Synthesis may well be one of the features that contributed to the success of Burley's commentary; yet it also caused dismay in modern scholars. Daly laments time and again that he is a "laconic writer" and finds it "sad" that he did not care to replace Aristotle's examples with his own.[77] A barely dissimulated disappointment emerges from his contribution and one is reminded of the witty remark by Ulrich Meier, according to whom

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[72] Aegidii Romani Opera Omnia, I.1/11, *Catalogo dei manoscritti, De regimine principum* (*Città del Vaticano-Italia*), ed. F. Del Punta and C. Luna (Florence: 1993), particularly xxvii–xxxiii; Charles F. Briggs, *Giles of Rome's De regimine principum. Reading and Writing Politics at Court and University, c.1275–c.1525* (Cambridge: 1999), particularly 91–107.

[73] D.A. Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics in the Italian Renaissance* (*ca. 1300–1650*). *The Universities and the Problem of Moral Education* (Leiden: 2002), particularly 468–69; noteworthy is the overturn in the relationship of the two commentaries by Burley with the diffusion of print: the commentary on the *Politics* clearly outnumbers the other as far as manuscript copies are concerned, but it was never printed. The commentary on the *Ethics*, on the contrary, had more than one printed edition. This "change of fortune" deserves more investigation.

[74] About the diffusion of this commentary, besides Flüeler's results referred to at footnote 3, see Jean Philippe Genet, "The Dissemination of Manuscripts Relating to English Political Thought in the Fourteenth Century," in *England and her Neighbours 1066–1453. Essays in Honour of Pierre Chaplais*, ed. Michael Jones and Malcolm Vale (London: 1989), 217–37; Genet, "La théorie politique en Angleterre au XIV siècle: sa diffusion, son public," in *Das Publikum politischer Theorie im 14. Jahrhundert*, ed. Jürgen Miethke (Munich: 1989), 269–91.

[75] See e.g. Roberto Lambertini, "Raimundus Acgerii's Commentary on Aristotle's Politics. Some Notes," *Vivarium* 40 (2002), 14–40, in particular 34–35; Vilem Herold, "Commentarium Johanis Wenceslai de Praga Super octo libros 'Politicorum' Aristotelis," *Mediaevalia Philosophica Polonorum* 26 (1982), 53–77; about this commentary see also Flüeler, *Rezeption und Interpretation*, 2, 33.

[76] See Flüeler, *Rezeption und Interpretation*, 40, 57, 68, 82, 84.

[77] Daly, "Some Notes," 281.

medieval commentaries on the *Politics* are a "spröde Quelle".[78] Such a disappointment could, however, be caused by incorrect expectations. Some modern readers seem to expect from medieval commentators that they apply Aristotle to the political realities of their time. In all evidence, however, this is not their intention, as Christoph Flüeler rightly pointed out.[79] Rather, they aim at reconstructing the theoretical framework of Aristotle's political thought, a *scientia politica*, which is valid for every situation: examples from the past of their contemporary political contest play a very subordinate role. The *Sitz im Leben* of their hermeneutical activity emerges almost indirectly, through the implicit presuppositions that influence their understanding of Aristotle. Nor can we expect such commentators to develop their own political theory while commenting on Aristotle. Other literary genres in Burley's time, for example the *de potestate pape* treatises,[80] are more likely to become a means to formulate a full-fledged theory, or at least to argue in favor of a political stance.[81] In the context of a literal commentary of this kind, the expression of the personal views of the commentator was usually confined to the *notanda*.[82] This implies that the modern scholar can, at the most, collect scattered remarks that hardly constitute what could be considered a systematic account. In Burley's case, we can grasp that he was a supporter of the monarchy both as a constitutional form and as a specific institution of his country, although, in principle, he does not prefer its hereditary form to the elective one.[83]

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[78] Ulrich Meier, "Molte rivoluzioni, molte novità. Gesellschaflticher Wandel im Spiegel der politischen Philosophie und im Urteil von städtischen Chronisten des Spätmittelalters," in *Sozialer Waldel in Gesellschaften des späten Mittelalters. Wahrnehmungsformen, Erklärungsmuster, Institutionen*, ed. Jürgen Miethke and Klaus Schreiner (Sigmaringen: 1994), 119–76, particularly 125.

[79] Flüeler, *Rezeption und Interpretation*, 54; see also Grignaschi, "La définition," 76: "La plupart de Commentateurs ne cherchent pas à adapter aux conditions de leur époque les théories qu'ils glosaient."

[80] About this literary genre see most recently Jürgen Miethke, *De potestate papae*. As above, n. 9.

[81] Therefore, what we read about the interest of Burley's commentary in Ottman and Wood "Walter of Burley," 16: "So Burley began his political life as part of the successful northern baronial party of rebels, which ought to increase the interest of his Politics commentary" seems to be grounded on a pretty modern pattern of thought. This does not prevent, of course, Burley's commentary from being highly interesting, albeit for other reasons.

[82] The intermediate role of *notanda* between literal commentary and *quaestiones* is rightly pointed out by Del Punta, "The Genre of Commentaries," 149, who refers to Burley's commentary on the *Physics*.

[83] Burley, *Expositio*, III, tr. 3, cap. 2, pars 4, part 1, fol. 46rb: "Apud aliquos melius est habere regem per successionem quam per electionem ut apud quos consuetum est regem

We also know that he adhered to a rather "papalist" interpretation of the relationship between temporal and spiritual powers.[84] A closer scrutiny of all the *notanda* could add some information to what we know of his understanding of Aristotle's political doctrine. I confine myself to some examples. Thomson noticed that in his commentary on Book VII Burley refers to Peter of Auvergne, but he missed the opportunity offered by this clue because he was misled by the meteorologic subject of the quotations. As a matter of fact, a comparison shows that the English master here refers explicitly to the commentary he had been tacitly plundering since the beginning.

| Peter of Auvergne | Walter Burleigh |
|---|---|
| Sunt autem venti orientales saniores, quoniam plurima materia ipsorum plus moratur sub via solis; et ideo calidiores sunt secundum Philosophum secundo *Metheororum*.[85] | Notandum est hic secundum Petrum de Alvernia quod materia ventorum orientalium plurimum stat et moratur sub via solis, et ideo sunt calidiores secundum philosophum secundo *Metheororum*.[86] |

The English master devotes a rather long *notandum* to solve the apparent contradiction between Aristotle's claim that the *civitas* is self-sufficient and the everyday experience that cities need the help of one another. Surprisingly, Burley explains this contrast by putting the blame on the corruption of human desires, which long for superfluous goods. If human beings were content with the necessaries of life, the *civitates* would be self-sufficient. The Philosopher, he claims, is right because he refers to nature; the actual practice of the citizen, on the contrary, is the effect of a corruption of this nature.[87] The pattern of thought inspiring Burley's

esse per successionem et apud alios ubi consuetum est eligere regem melius est habere per electionem."

[84] Burley, *Expositio*, VI, tr. 2, cap. 1, pars 3, fol. 98va: "Notandum est hic quod principatus politicus non est supra principatum divinum, quia dicit quod hoc genus, principatuum divinorum, est aliud genus a genere principatuum politicorum. Idem patet per hoc quod divina super omnia sunt; et per consequens principatus divinus super omnes principatus est, ut sic civitas sit sicut totus mundus, qui ordinatus est ad primam causam omnium." Already highlighted by Daly "The Conclusions . . . Books V and VI," 149.

[85] Peter of Auvergne, *Scriptum*, l. VII, cap. 9; cf. ed. Spiazzi, 376.

[86] Burley, *Expositio*, VIII, tr. 3, cap. 4, pars 1, part 2, fol. 116vb.

[87] Burley, *Expositio*, I, tr. 1, cap. 1, pars. 1, 4vb: "Notanda sunt hic duo: primo quod civitas est per se sufficiens nec obstat quod civitates sibi invicem subveniunt: nam quod una civitas indiget auxilio alterius est propter corruptionem humane concupiscentie, que non

explanation is strongly reminiscent of the Christian doctrine of the Fall, although he does not mention the concept of sin at all. Needless to say, having recourse to the idea of corrupted nature to explain a widely spread practice that contrasts with theory seems a "non-Aristotelian" way to support a claim of Aristotle's.

Sometimes, *notanda* raise questions that the modern reader would hardly judge relevant for a political discussion. For example, Burley perceives a conflict between Aristotle's genetic account of the origin of the *civitas* from the *domus* and the doctrine of the eternity of the world. A similar incongruity exists, to his eyes, also with Aristotle's explanation of the institution of money. The English master objects that, if the world is eternal, *domus*, *civitates*, *pecuniae* must have always existed. Interestingly enough, in his solution Burley does not question the doctrine of the eternity of the world, which he sees as genuinely Aristotelian, but tries to save the overall consistency of the Philosopher suggesting that he must have meant, while describing the growth of the city from the household, not the absolute beginning of such communities, but rather a relative one. Here Burley has recourse to the idea of a *diluvium*. According to his interpretation, Aristotle was speaking of the formation of *civitas* after a certain flood: "determinatum diluuium".[88] In all evidence, Burley is not necessarily referring to the biblical deluge, but rather to a natural catastrophe, which happens time and again in the eternity.[89]

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est contenta sufficientia, sed querit superflua et curiosa . . .; unde quod una civitas indigeat alterius subsidio non est a natura, sed a corruptione humane concupiscentie. Civitas etiam dicitur per se sufficiens quia habet ex se sufficientiam ad vitam, quia quicquid est necessarium pro vita conservanda invenitur in ea."

[88] Burley, *Expositio*, I, tr. 1, cap. 1, pars. 1, fol. 4vb: "Secundo est notandum quod secundum intentionem Philosophi mundus fuit ab eterno, et per consequens civitates et regna erant ab eterno. Et hoc quod Philosophus dicit hic, quod vicus procedit ex prima domo, est intelligendum non simpliciter, quia omne domum precessit domus. Verumtamen, post determinatum diluvium generale fiebat domus de novo, et etiam vici et civitates. Et sic est dare primam domum, non simpliciter, sed in respectu ad determinatum tempus."

[89] Burley returns to this matter in Book II; see *Expositio*, II, tract. 2, cap. 5, pars 2, part 2, fol. 27va–b: "Notandum est quod ex primo libro et etiam ex processu Philosophi hic videtur quod generatio hominis non fuit /27vb/ ab eterno. Nam in primo libro dicit quod ex prima domo generatur vicus, et ex vicis civitas. Idem patet ex processu generationis numismatum quod ponit in primo libro. Item, hic dicit primos homines fuisse insipientes et stultos. Et tamen ex philosophia naturali vult mundum esse eternum. Istud solvitur sic, quod post eversionem hominum, sive post diluvia sive post quamcumque corruptionem, vel aliqui sunt nati de terra vel aliqui relicti, ex quibus perfluxit generatio. Communiter et de illis primis loquitur hic, et maxime de illis qui narrantur fuisse nati de terra."

## *Concluding Remarks*

Flüeler once used an apt metaphor in writing that modern scholars tend to read medieval commentaries on the *Politics* "against the nap".[90] In fact, the intended goal of the commentator, to explain Aristotle correctly, interests contemporary students of political thought less than his peculiarities, his idiosyncrasies, and his shortcomings. If we focus only on these aspects, however, we risk missing the features that made a commentary interesting for the medieval public. To the satisfaction of scholars such as Gianfranco Fioravanti,[91] Albert the Great was not a "laconic writer" like Burley, but manuscript evidence clearly shows that the English master reached a wider audience in the Middle Ages. In assessing the relevance of a medieval commentary on the *Politics* we should therefore emancipate ourselves from the modern standards of originality, and take into consideration that there is a "polarity" between tradition and originality that is distinctive to this genre, as Francesco Del Punta clearly pointed out.[92] Burley's *Expositio* should be read in a tradition, and especially on the background of the so-called Aquinas–Peter of Auvergne commentary that has been identified as its main source. Burley's leaning on this previous commentary has often discouraged modern scholars. This can be justified for the parts in which he limits himself to copying Peter of Auvergne. For the rest of the work, however, one should keep in mind that it is rather unusual that a medieval commentator fulfills his task without helping himself with a previous commentary, especially when it enjoyed the position of a "standard" commentary, as was the case for the Aquinas–Auvergne one. Burley's contribution can be truly appreciated by methodically comparing his text with its model, evaluating changes and shifts in structure and content. Only on this background do its peculiarities and its originality become, so to speak, visible. One could legitimately raise the question, however, of the relevance of this contribution beyond the narrow boundaries of the exegesis of a text by Aristotle. One possible answer is that literal commentaries on the *Politics* are usually not carriers of debates in political theory, but contribute to the shaping of the language and to the conceptual tools that are then implemented in some milestones of

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[90] Flüeler, *Rezeption und Interpretation*, 50.

[91] Gianfranco Fioravanti, "*Politiae Orientalium et Aegiptiorum*. Alberto Magno e la *Politica* aristotelica," *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, ser. III, 11.1 (1981), 399–429.

[92] Del Punta, "The Genre of Commentaries," especially 150–51.

the history of political thought. To take just one example, the first *dictio* of the *Defensor Pacis* would hardly be thinkable without the tradition of the commentaries,[93] but also Ockham's *Dialogus*, in its third part, owes much to the Aquinas–Auvergne commentary.[94] Burley's own work, with his remarkable diffusion, contributed to the development of the medieval Aristotelian political language,[95] which was one of the constituents[96] of political theory in the last decades of the later Middle Ages.

[93] Flüeler, *Rezeption und Interpretation*, 1, 120–31; Carlo Dolcini, *Introduzione a Marsilio da Padova* (Rome: 1995).

[94] Roberto Lambertini, "Wilhelm von Ockham als Leser der *Politica*," in *Das Publikum* (as above, n. 74), 207–24.

[95] For an explanation of this concept, see, e.g. Antony Black, *Political Thought in Europe 1250–1450* (Cambridge: 1992), 7–13. I stressed the advantages and the limits of the use of the concept of "political language" in my "La diffusione della Politica e la definizione di un linguaggio politico aristotelico," *Quaderni Storici* 102 (1999), 677–704.

[96] Miethke, *De potestate papae*, 1–24.

PART FOUR

# BURLEY'S LEGACY

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

# 14TH-CENTURY REACTIONS TO BURLEY

Fabrizio Amerini

## 1. *Burley between Oxford and Paris*

A historian who tries to reconstruct the reactions to the philosophy of Walter Burley is faced with two basic difficulties.

A first difficulty stems from Burley's long academic career. As is known, Burley composed his works across a period of 30 years, from the beginning of 14th century to the 1330s, and taught both at Oxford and at Paris, where he became master of theology in ca. 1322.[1] This means that there are at least two generations of philosophers and theologians, and two university contexts, for a historian to consider in reconstructing the reactions to Burley's philosophy. In general, this significantly complicates the interpreter's attempt at singling out the diffusion of Burley's philosophy, and the situation is more complicated, since, over time, Burley changed or refined his views on some of the crucial aspects of his philosophy. Ockham, for instance, in his *Summa logicae* seems to know and attack Burley's early account of supposition,[2] and Burley in turn attacks Ockham's reply in his late *De puritate artis logicae*, which dates to after 1324. Nikolas Drukken from Denmark, in turn, while defending Ockham's views of supposition in his *Tractatus de suppositionibus* (which dates to around 1340), criticizes Burley's late version of the theory of supposition. As often happens, though, it is especially the last form assumed by Burley's philosophy that raises problems and discussions. In particular, some philosophers argued against Burley's final defense of realism in ontology and semantics. The reasons for the interest in Burley's mature philosophy is that the philosophy of the so-called "second" Burley (that after 1324) presents itself as a consistent alternative to the philosophy of William of Ockham.[3]

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[1] See above, the first chapter of the volume, 00.

[2] On this, see S.F. Brown, "Walter Burley's *Tractatus de suppositione* and its Relation to William of Ockham's *Summa logicae*," *Franciscan Studies* 32 (1972), 15–64.

[3] For an introduction to the development of Burley's semantics and ontology, see A.D. Conti, "Ontology in Walter Burley's Last Commentary on the *Ars vetus*," *Franciscan*

Philosophers sympathetic to Ockham's thought, or at least to a more nominalist way of doing philosophy, tend to criticize Burley's realism.

A second difficulty the historian encounters stems from Burley's wide-ranging philosophical production. Burley leaves us several works—both Aristotelian commentaries and specialized treatises—in which he deals with a great number of topics. Specifically, Burley seems to have exerted a persistent influence in four main fields: ethics, philosophy of nature, logic, and metaphysics. As to the philosophy of nature in particular, Burley composed at least three different commentaries on the *Physics* (the first two written between 1316 and ca. 1322, while the third version was probably written after 1324),[4] which strongly influenced the following generation with respect to various issues, such as the nature of space, time, motion, and related matters. His third commentary on the *Physics*, which contains a full-fledged criticism of Ockham, was especially appreciated in Italy, while it was attacked at Oxford. Likewise, Burley's *Tractatus primus* on accidental forms was a model for the "new physics" endorsed by the so-called *Parisienses* (Albert of Saxony up to Nicole Oresme), while it was debated by Thomas Wylton. Burley's *Tractatus secundus* on the intension and remission of forms instead had an influence on the logical treatments of physical themes elaborated by the group of thinkers known as the Oxford Calculators (Thomas Bradwardine, William Heytesbury, Richard Swineshead, and John Dumbleton).[5] At Paris, by contrast, Buridan's

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*Studies* 50 (1990), 121–76; H.U. Wöhler, "Das 'realistische' Individualitätskonzept Walter Burleys im geschichtlichen Kontext," in *Individuum und Individualität im Mittelalter*, ed. J.A. Aertsen and A. Speer (Berlin: 1996), 312–26; E. Karger, "Walter Burley's Realism," *Vivarium* 37.1 (1999), 24–40; A.D. Conti, "Significato e verità in Walter Burley," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 11 (2000), 317–50. For a detailed presentation of Burley's semantics and ontology, see above in this volume, Part II: "The Logician and Metaphysician," 87–222.

[4] On this, see R. Wood, "Walter Burley's *Physics* Commentaries," *Franciscan Studies* 44 (1984), 275–327. See also above, the first chapter of this book, 00.

[5] See e.g. F. Zanin, *L'analisi matematica del movimento e i limiti della fisica tardomedievale: la ricezione della perspectiva e delle calculationes alla Facoltà delle arti di Parigi, 1340–1350* (Padova: 2004). On the Oxford Calculators, see E.D. Sylla, "The Oxford Calculators," in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, N. Kretzmann and J. Pinborg (Cambridge, Eng.: 1982), 540–63; J.E. Murdoch, "The Analytic Character of Late Medieval Learning: Natural Philosophy without Nature," in *Approaches to Nature in the Middle Ages*, ed. L.D. Roberts (Binghamton: 1982), 171–213. On the spreading from England to Paris of the so-called "new physics", see E.D. Sylla, "Transmission of The New Physics of the Fourteenth Century From England to the Continent," in *La nouvelle physique du XIV^e siècle*, ed. S. Caroti and P. Souffrin (Florence: 1997), 65–109. In particular, on Burley's late career commentary on the *Physics* and the reactions to it, see E.D. Sylla, *The Oxford Calculators and the Mathematics of Motion 1320–1350. Physics and Measurement by Latitudes* (New York: 1991); "Walter Burley's Physics Commentaries and the Mathematics of Alteration,"

substitution-of-forms account of the intension and remission of forms—as Stefano Caroti has pointed out[6]—seems to echo Burley's treatment, and this tells us that Burley's doctrines were regularly debated in the age of Buridan. The influence of Burley in this area was probably intense, although it is still to be accurately assessed by the scholarship. A detailed study of Burley's legacy in Buridan's school is especially needed.

At Oxford, the researches of Alessandro D. Conti and, more recently, Laurent Cesalli, have shown that the fortune of Burley's philosophy of nature and logic was long-standing.[7] In particular, Burley's philosophical realism significantly influenced Wyclif's philosophical theology and late 14th-century Oxford thinkers such as John Sharpe, Robert Alyngton, William Milverly, William Penbygull, John Tarteys, and Roger Whelpdale, even though all of them show a common tendency to revise some aspects of Burley's philosophy. Particularly, the more discussed topics concern the relation of constitution that universals bear to particulars and the theory of predication. To quote only some cases, Robert Alyngton's commentary on the *Categories* is strictly molded on the last commentary of Burley, although Alyngton states to be more sympathetic to Wyclif's explanation of categories and universals.[8] William Penbygull discusses Burley's doctrine

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*Early Science and Medicine* 6.3 (2001), 149–84; "Walter Burley's Practice as a Commentator on Aristotle's *Physics*," *Medioevo* 27 (2002), 301–72; D.-J. Dekker, "Time and Motion in Walter Burley's Late Expositio On Aristotle's *Physics*," *Early Science and Medicine* 6.3 (2001), 185–203.

[6] See S. Caroti, "Some Remarks on Buridan's Discussion on Intension and Remission," *Vivarium* 42.1 (2004), 58–85. The hallmark of Burley's account of form is that no form can receive a greater or lesser degree of intensity, although a form can be received in a subject according to a greater or lesser degree of intensity, according to that such a form is more or less perfect (see e.g. Walter Burley, *Scriptum super librum Praedicamentorum*, ed. Venice, 1478, fol. f 8 vb). On Burley's theory of the intension and remission of forms, see H. Shapiro, "Walter Burley and the Intension and Remission of Forms," *Speculum* 34.3 (1959), 413–27.

[7] See e.g. A.D. Conti, "Studio storico-dottrinale," in Johannes Sharpe, *Quaestio super Universalia*, ed. A.D. Conti (Florence: 1990), in particular 221–27, and 333–36. On Wyclif's realism, in particular, see Conti, "Wyclif's Logic and Metaphysics," in *A Companion to John Wyclif*, ed. I.C. Levy (Leiden: 2006), 67–125; Conti, "John Wyclif," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (*Winter 2005 Edition*), ed. E.N. Zalta; available online at http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2005/entries/wyclif/; P.V. Spade, "Introduction," in J. Wyclif, *On Universals*, trans. A. Kenny (Oxford: 1995); "The Problem of Universals and Wyclif's Alleged 'Ultrarealism'," *Vivarium* 43.1 (2005), 111–23; L. Cesalli, "Le 'pan-propositionnalisme' de Jean Wyclif," *Vivarium* 43.1 (2005), 124–55. On John Sharpe's and the other so-called Oxford realists' theory of universals, see Conti, "Johannes Sharpe's Ontology and Semantics: Oxford Realism Revisited," *Vivarium* 43.1 (2005), 156–86; Conti, "Studio storico-critico," in Johannes Sharpe *Quaestio super Universalia* cit., 211–336.

[8] On Alyngton's realism, see A.D. Conti, "Robert Alyngton," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (*Fall 2006 Edition*), ed. E.N. Zalta; available online at http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2006/entries/alyngton/.

of real proposition to a large extent, while taking a position against it.[9] John Wyclif closely follows Burley in arguing for the extramental existence of universals (this is required—Wyclif explains—for accounting correctly for the nature of essential predication), but he thinks that the strong real distinction Burley put between real universals and their individual instances must be nuanced. Wyclif's suggestion is to return to Scotus and to describe such a distinction as a formal distinction. As a result, we find Wyclif implementing Burley's semantics by introducing, besides the standard Aristotelian kinds of predication (per se and *per accidens*) new kinds of predication (*secundum essentiam*, *secundum habitudinem*) in order to intercept the different relationship of constitution that the essential components of an individual thing bear to each other. Wyclif, in particular, states that his aim is to elaborate a kind of philosophical realism that is in between those of Thomas Aquinas and Giles of Rome, on the one hand, and Burley, on the other.[10]

From a different perspective, Burley's logical thought also influenced the logicians. Some studies have focused on the role played by Burley (especially his *De puritate artis logicae. Tractatus longior*) in the tradition of handbooks of logic (Richard Brinkley, Richard Campsall, Richard Ferrybridge).[11] In Italy, Walter Burley's realism was one of the main sources of Paul of Venice's logic and philosophy.

A complete taxonomy of the reactions to Burley should take into account all of these and many other aspects of Burley's philosophy. The picture could become even more complicated if one were to classify different kinds of reactions to Burley. For the time being, we have spoken generically of "reactions", but someone could demand more precision and completeness and suggest complicating the above picture by introducing two qualifications.

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[9] See A.D. Conti, "Teoria degli universali e teoria della predicazione nel trattato *De universalibus* di William Penbygull: discussione e difesa della posizione di Wyclif," *Medioevo* 8 (1982), 137–203; Conti, "William Penbygull," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (*Fall 2006 Edition*), ed. E.N. Zalta; available online at http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2006/entries/penbygull/.

[10] See e.g. John Wyclif, *Tractatus de universalibus*, c. 4, ed. I.J. Mueller (Oxford: 1985), 86–87.

[11] See e.g. L. Cesalli, "Some Fourteenth-Century Realist Theories of the Proposition. A Historical and Speculative Study," in *Signification in Language and Culture*, ed. H.S. Gill (Shimla: 2002), 83–118; L. Cesalli, *Le réalisme propositionnel. Sémantique et ontology des propositions chez Jean Duns Scot, Gauthier Burley, Richard Brinkley et Jean Wyclif* (Paris: 2007), 241–309.

First, one should classify the medieval philosophers reacting to Burley according to the religious order to which they belong. Especially when each order, during the 14th century, acquires its own intellectual identity, one could distinguish the reactions to Burley according to whether a philosopher is a Dominican, a Franciscan, or a member of some other religious order. Generally speaking, the Augustinians tend to follow the philosophy of Gilles of Rome and Gregory of Rimini rather than that of Walter Burley, so they opt for a more "nominalistic" or "conceptualistic" way of doing philosophy and theology. The Dominicans, on the other hand, appear to be more willing to follow realism in philosophy and for them—although things are actually different for each thinker—it is not a particularly tricky matter to reconcile Burley with a more or less Aquinas-inspired philosophy. Things are obviously more complicated in the case of the Franciscans. Burley seems to provide a good philosophical alternative to Ockham, but his theology is underdeveloped. This could explain why Peter Auriol exerts a more decisive influence on the Continental theologians. But once more this is not true in general, since Burley furnishes many English theologians with the logical tools to apply to theology.

Second, one should also classify the medieval philosophers reacting to Burley according to whether they accepted all or some of Burley's doctrines or whether they entirely rejected his philosophy. In general, the reactions at Oxford and at Paris take different forms, and this depends on both institutional and philosophical factors. As Zénon Kaluza has opportunely noted, the philosophical features of English and Parisian philosophy are very different in the second half of the 14th century: "the mainstream of English philosophy after 1350 was realist. . . . If, at Oxford, the second half of the fourteenth century and the fifteenth century were dominated by realism, the situation was very different in Paris, despite the ban on teaching Ockham's doctrines. To consider just the second half of the fourteenth century: the faculty of arts was dominated by 'Parisian Nominalism', or the school of Buridan."[12] Although Kaluza's distinction needs some qualification since there was a consistent tradition of realism also at Paris, nonetheless it correctly picks out what the trends actually were and explains well why we encounter such different kinds of reaction

[12] See Z. Kaluza, "Late Medieval Philosophy, 1350–1500," in *Routledge History of Philosophy. Volume III. Medieval Philosophy*, ed. J. Marenbon (London: 1998), 430 and 437. As William J. Courtenay remarked, the influence of Scotus's philosophy in England was limited until a very late date. See W.J. Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars in Fourteenth-Century England* (Princeton: 1987), 185ff.

to Burley at Paris and at Oxford. Anyway, except for such differences, both Oxford and Parisian thinkers of the second half of the 14th century seem to share the feature of confronting Burley's philosophy. However, because of the complexity of Burley's life and philosophical production there is not enough room to satisfy entirely here the above demand for completeness and precision.

How therefore shall we proceed in the following? First of all, I shall leave aside the philosophical debate between Burley and Ockham, which is treated in the second chapter of this volume[13] and which is the path most trodden by medieval scholars (this is due to the fact that Ockham is a sort of watershed in the career of Burley). Second, in this chapter I shall not dwell on those reactions that have been already investigated by contemporary scholarship. In particular, I shall not take into consideration the late 14th- and 15th-century English reactions to Burley. With respect to this, I shall limit myself to referring to the secondary literature as I have indicated in footnotes. Third and finally, I shall not take into consideration the reactions to Burley's philosophy of nature and ethics: a systematic comparison with Buridan and the Paris physicians, for example, must still be made and, because of its complexity, it would have to be the object of a separate study.[14] In what follows, therefore, I shall focus only on Burley's metaphysics. In practice, I shall discuss some cases that show the continued influence of the philosophy of Walter Burley. The first case (§ 1) concerns some aspects of Burley's often-celebrated realism, specifically the reactions to his realist interpretation of the *Categories* and to his idea that real propositions exist outside the mind *qua* references of the linguistic affirmative and true sentences.[15] The second case (§ 2) instead concerns Burley's account of the nature and division

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[13] See above, 49–84.

[14] We know that Burley's *Expositio librorum Ethicorum* had a certain influence on the homonymous work of Albert of Saxony and on the *Conclusiones Ethicorum* of Paul of Venice. See e.g. M. Borgo, "Paul of Venice on the First Book of the *Nichomachean Ethics*: Some Considerations about the *Conclusiones Ethicorum*," in *Universality of Reason. Plurality of Philosophies in the Middle Ages*. Proceedings of the XII International Congress of S.I.E.P.M., Palermo, 17–22 September 2007, 4 vols., ed. A. Musco *et al.* (Palermo: 2012), vol. II.2, 753–62.

[15] For an introduction to Burley's theory of proposition, see J. Pinborg, "Walter Burleigh on the Meaning of Proposition," *Classica et Medieaevalia* 28 (1969), 394–404; E. Karger, "Mental Sentences According to Burley and the Early Ockham," *Vivarium* 34 (1996), 192–230; L. Cesalli, "Le réalisme propositionnel de Walter Burley," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age* 68 (2001), 155–221, and more recently Cesalli, *Le réalisme propositionnel*, 166–240. See also G. Nuchelmans, *Theories of the Proposition* (Amsterdam: 1973), 219–25. For further details on this aspect, see above 119–31.

of supposition, which strongly depends on his solution to the problem of universals.

## 2. *Controversies over Burley's Realism*

### 2.1. *The Problem with Burley's Realism*

In the contemporary scholarship, the ontology that is associated with the name of Burley is often labeled "exaggerated realism". This label comes from Herman Shapiro,[16] who described Burley's theory of universals as characterized by the conviction that some universal entities exist outside the mind, separate or separable from any particular exemplification of them. Specifically, Burley's realism about universals seems to be governed by two theses:

> (T1) Universals (both substantial and accidental) whose particulars falling under them exist outside the mind also exist outside the mind;
> (T2) Universals are different from or nonidentical to the particulars that instantiate them.

Thesis (T1) is limited to stating that there is something extramental that is not reducible to the particular things of our ordinary experience and their features. It is especially thesis (T2) that marks the realist solution to the problem of universals. In particular, Burley seems to be of the opinion that the real distinction or real nonidentity between universals and particulars entails that extramental universals have a certain real unity before the mind provides them with one. Much ink has been spilled on Burley's theory of universals; as a result of this, Shapiro's label has been essentially disproved.

Burley scholars have emphasized that, like Scotus, Burley is careful in avoiding any form of Platonic commitment to universals. Paul of Venice still described Burley as a Platonic ontologist, but if we arrange things correctly we see that Burley cannot be counted among the advocates of Plato. In the prologue to his late commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge* (which dates to 1337), for example, Burley avoids any strong realist interpretation of Avicenna's distinction between first and second intentions and relates this distinction to that between first and second concepts. Burley explains

[16] See H. Shapiro, "A Note on Walter Burley's Exaggerated Realism," *Franciscan Studies* 21 (1960), 205–14; Shapiro, "More on the 'Exaggeration' of Burley's Realism," *Manuscripta* 6–2 (1962), 94–98.

logic in fact as the science dealing with first intentions as determined by second intentions, while portraying a first intention as the extramental thing *qua* falling under a first concept (or natural-kind concept).[17] Burley is more explicit about the status of first intentions (namely of universals) in the commentary on the *Categories* (which dates to the same year), where a first intention is described as a thing *qua* underlying a second intention.[18] Such formulations entail two things, among others. First, Burley does not seem to regard a first intention, such as *man*, as an extramental thing *qua* existing outside the mind. Man is an extramental thing that has been cognized by the mind and in consequence of such an act of cognition it has become the subject of certain properties of some intentional or mental kind, such as being a species or being universal. In brief, *man* indicates an extramental thing *qua* considered in association with such intentional properties. Following Avicenna, such an extramental thing *qua* existing in the mind is a thing's nature absolutely considered. Second, Burley tends to portray a first intention both as a first concept and as a conceived thing; this allows an interpreter to take Burley's realism of universals as compatible to a certain degree with conceptualism. On the other hand, though, Burley's theory of universals cannot be explained as a standard kind of conceptualism or "moderate" realism such as that of Thomas Aquinas. What reasons could one have therefore to consider Burley's theory of universals as "exaggerated"?

Any form of metaphysical realism seems to subscribe to (T1). Regardless of how such extramental universals are accounted for (as substantial items or rather as general properties of particular things), a realist is confident that there are aspects of the world that cannot be explained in terms of the particularity of the things. Such aspects are required in order to explain completely the genesis, recurrence, and intersubjectivity of our universal concepts and the semantic functioning of our conventional languages. What distinguishes realism from conceptualism—one would assume—is precisely (T1), that is, the role attributed to the mind in forming universals (i.e. in attributing to a thing its own—arguably universal—character). If (T1) is a basic tenet for realists, what distinguishes the different forms of realism is rather (T2), namely the way of understanding the relationship

[17] See Burley, *Expositio super Porphyrii Isagogen*, in *Expositio super Artem Veterem Porphyrii et Aristotelis* (Venice: 1497; repr. Frankfurt am Main: 1967), fol. a1vb.

[18] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Praedicamentorum*, in *Expositio super Artem Veterem Porphyrii et Aristotelis*, fol. b6va.

of composition between a thing and the forms that determine the various beings (or kinds or modes of being) of that thing.

Both an Aristotelian and a Platonic account of universals is realist in essence. But they elaborate different explanations of the relationship between a thing and its different forms of being. Aristotle can be seen as a champion of what Michael J. Loux has recently called "the constituent strategy"[19] for solving the problem of universals, since according to Aristotle it is a constitutive feature of an extramental thing to have its own character by virtue of itself. Aristotle thinks that it is possible to strip away from a thing any nonsubstantial form of being (qualitative, quantitative, and so on), but it is not possible to separate from a thing its substantial form of being, for otherwise the thing vanishes. Beyond the thing, there is nothing that remains, such as a formally undifferentiated and primary matter. Such "essentialism" clearly is a kind of realism, since Aristotle seems to be of the opinion that a thing exemplifies some sort of essential or substantial properties that it cannot lack without ceasing to be (or to be what it is). But his "essentialism" is nonetheless open to be interpreted in terms of different versions (or degrees) of realism, since Aristotle does not say anything about whether such properties, in addition to being *inseparable* from the thing, are also *indistinguishable* from it.

On the other hand, it goes without saying that a Platonic account of universals is realist. It is usually considered the paradigm of any type of "exaggerated" realism. Unlike Aristotle, Platonic-inspired thinkers tend to hold that substantial properties can also be separated from a thing, so they rather belong to the group that Michael J. Loux has labeled as "relational ontologists". The main feature of such an ontological attitude is that of considering a thing as something that has its own character not by virtue of itself, but by virtue of a relation (i.e. participation) that it bears to a different and totally independent entity. Aristotle can be regarded as a relational ontologist with respect to a thing's nonsubstantial being, but a Platonic thinker is so also for what concerns a thing's substantial being.

This picture can be complicated in various ways. For example, if one is sympathetic to the Aristotelian view that substantial properties cannot be separated from a thing, then she/he must clarify whether such inseparability is necessary only by nature or even logically, and, in the first case, whether inseparability entails indistinguishability or not. As is clear,

[19] See M.J. Loux, "Perspectives on the Problem of Universals," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 18 (2007), 601–21, esp. 620.

(T1) is challenged only if one takes the final step, from inseparability to indistinguishability. In this case, it is obvious that a thing cannot be distinguished from its properties, even though this would enable someone to deny either the existence of a thing as something beyond a cluster of properties or the existence of properties as distinct from a thing so-and-so qualified. But if one does not take the final step, from inseparability to indistinguishability, arguing instead for a certain, though indirect, possibility of marking off the thing's properties from the thing itself, then the validity of (T1) is not called into question.

In general, scholars tend to describe Burley's refinement in ontology, after Ockham's criticism, as a move from distinguishability to separability between universals and particulars. This description must be qualified, however, since the late or "second" Burley as well does not seem to hold universals to exist separately of particulars, at least in the way that a Platonic thinker would explain such a separation. Burley's refinement, rather, seems to concern the degree of distinction between universals and particulars. Thesis (T1) is not in question, but the real problem concerns the way of understanding thesis (T2). In a first stage, Burley would have accepted Scotus's doctrine of the formal distinction or nonidentity between universals and particulars, while in a second stage, as a consequence of Ockham's criticism, Burley would have defended a stronger real distinction between universals and particulars.[20] Thus any object of our ordinary experience turns out to have, for the "second" Burley, many types of real composition: one single "intrinsic" composition, namely that of the individual matter and the individual substantial form; and many more "extrinsic" compositions, such as that of substantial and accidental being, or that of essence and existence. On this ontology Burley anchors his semantics, which is based upon the principle that every linguistic item, either atomic (such as a natural-kind term) or molecular (such as a proposition), has a distinct counterpart in the extramental world. Ultimately, no particular "exaggeration" seems to be included in Burley's mature theory of universals,

[20] For Ockham's criticism and Burley's reply, see Burley, *Expositio super librum Praedicamentorum*, fols. c6va–c8ra. Three aspects of Burley's reply can be underlined here. First, although Burley argues for the extramental existence of universals, he explicitly rejects a mereological explanation of the extramental particulars, that is, he denies that universals are constituent parts of particulars. Second, Burley also endorses the so-called Principle of Instantiation, denying that universals can exist if no particular exists. Third, Burley describes the substantial properties of a thing as extrinsic properties: although with a not particularly accurate expression, Burley qualifies the essential properties of a particular thing as something "essentially concomitant to the essence" of such a thing (fol. c8ra).

but a more accurate description of and some subtle argument for the distinction of a thing's substantial properties from the thing itself. Burley himself is aware that his doctrine can have some heavy consequences, so, in replying to Ockham's arguments, he attenuates the "exaggeration" of his realism by denying that universals exhibit a proper kind of numerical identity. Universals can be considered as one only in a broader sense, but they fail to be counted as one in number. Nonetheless, despite Burley's warning, what was especially debated by his opponents was the degree of extramental unity to be accorded to universals.

For some medieval philosophers, the ontological strategy of the "second" Burley who (i) shifts from the formal to the real distinction or non-identity between universals and particulars, (ii) while maintaining at the same time the existential inseparability of universals from particulars, raises many problems. Burley's metaphysics had a contrasted reception and the different reactions to it precisely are due to the fact that Burley originally refreshes a long-standing tradition of realism. In general, the arguments in favor of the realism of universals that Burley employs in the prologue to his late exposition of the *Physics* or in the last commentary on the *Categories* are not new nor do they commit Burley to a specific form of "exaggerated" realism, as has been said. But Burley puts a particular emphasis on the need for postulating extramental universals in order to explain correctly the function of our language and thought, and gives new force to some standard argument for realism. In particular, Burley importantly rethinks the traditional criteria for identity and distinction. So while some philosophers are willing to take up Burley's analysis of reality, others prefer to adopt a weaker form of realism, which consists in attributing a major role to the mind in the formation of universals. The influence of Burley's metaphysics was persistent at Oxford, while at Paris the decreasing influence of Burley in the Arts Faculty goes together with the rise of Buridan's philosophy. In Italy, by contrast, Burley continues to be influential, but not every aspect of his realism was accepted. In the following, we shall consider more closely these two sorts of reactions: the relationship between Burley and Buridan (1.2) and some Italian reactions to Burley (1.3).

### 2.2. *Buridan and Burley*

The fact that Burley does not depart from a well-established tradition of realism—although Burley significantly corroborates the logical coherency and the philosophical consistency of such a tradition, while accentuating

in a more realistic fashion some features of it—can explain the interpreter's difficulty in singling out Buridan's attitude towards Burley. Buridan knows Burley's philosophy, but Buridan rarely quotes Burley by name. For the most part, this depends on Buridan's typical way of doing philosophy. So when Buridan refers to doctrines endorsed also by Burley, it turns to be difficult for an interpreter to establish whether Burley lies behind Buridan's references. Nonetheless there are some hints that it is precisely Burley who is hidden behind Buridan's criticism. For example, Burley is not explicitly mentioned in Buridan's *Summulae de praedicabilibus*, but arguably Burley is the target of the criticism that Buridan makes concerning the existence of real propositions, on which we shall say something in the following section.[21] Likewise, Burley is not explicitly quoted in the *Summulae in Praedicamenta* nor in the *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, although there are some philosophical positions discussed by Buridan that could easily be traced back to Burley, for example that of the extramental classificatory power of the categorial table,[22] that of the real distinction between a relation and its foundation,[23] or the position, introduced by Buridan as "a great doubt" (*magna dubitatio*), concerning the simultaneous existence of relatives.[24] Let me consider these cases in more detail.

2.2.1. *Buridan's Reaction to Burley's Account of Categories*

At the beginning of his late commentary on the *Categories*, Burley gives some arguments for proving first that the categorial table classifies things and not words, and second, that it is not possible to deduce the sufficiency of Aristotle's classification. Burley's position is that the *Categories* propose a classification of things,[25] but that the sufficiency of such a classification cannot be proved.[26] Burley knows that to endorse an ontological interpretation of the *Categories* raises a problem, since the *Categories* are the first text, among Aristotle's logical works, that is studied at the Arts Faculty.

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[21] See John Buridan, *Summulae de praedicabilibus*, 2.1.1, ed. L.M. de Rijk (Nijmegen: 1995), 9, ll. 33–39.

[22] See Buridan, *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, q. 3, ed. J. Schneider (Munich: 1983), 14–29.

[23] See Buridan, *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, q. 10, 69–76.

[24] See Buridan, *Summulae in Praedicamenta*, 3.4.1, n. 4, ed. E.P. Bos (Nijmegen: 1994), 52–53, ll. 95–123; *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, q. 13, 92–99, esp. 94–96, ll. 74–105.

[25] See Burley, *Expositio super Librum Praedicamentorum*, fol. b6va: "Dico ergo quod liber *Predicamentorum* est de rebus secundum quod eis insunt intentiones secunde."

[26] See Burley, *Expositio super Librum Praedicamentorum*, fol. c4rb: "Intelligendum est quod quamvis numerus predicamentorum non possit demonstrari, tamen aliqui acceperunt sufficientiam predicamentorum sic."

This is the reason why many philosophers preferred a linguistic interpretation of the *Categories*, assuming that the *Categories* deal with the atomic parts of linguistic propositions, which will then be examined in the *De interpretatione*. It is in order to solve this problem that Burley introduces his characteristic doctrine of real proposition. If an interpreter holds that some propositions can be composed of extramental things, nothing prevents him from reading the *Categories* as a treatise dealing with the basic and simple kinds of extramental things that can compose a real proposition—even granting that the extramental things are not studied in the *Categories* as extramentally existing but as expressed by words. Specifically, the *Categories* classify every extramental thing that can be part of a real proposition as mirrored by a standard linguistic proposition.

Buridan agrees with Burley that Aristotle has given no argument for proving the sufficiency of the categorial table.[27] But except for this, Buridan radically disagrees with Burley's interpretation. In particular, Buridan inverts Burley's way of explaining the *Categories*. Buridan proposes a semantic interpretation of the *Categories*. Quite systematically, Buridan translates every sentence concerning things into a sentence concerning words that signify things. Thus after having explained that Aristotle in the preliminary chapter of the *Categories* refers to equivocal, univocal, and denominative terms and not things, if not secondarily[28] (the reason is that words can signify things only by way of the concepts by means of which the things have been conceptualized, so words cannot refer immediately to things),[29] Buridan rejects Burley's ontological interpretation of the relations of "being said of a subject" and "being in a subject" (which Burley grounded upon the strict parallelism he put between language and reality).[30] According to Buridan, the categorial table cannot classify things. His main argument is that one and the same thing can fall under different categories (this especially occurs in the case of relatives). Buridan's conclusion, therefore, is opposite to Burley's: the categories can

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[27] See Buridan, *Summulae in Praedicamenta*, 3.1.8, 18–19, ll. 14–24; *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, q. 3, 19–20, ll. 131–59.

[28] Compare Burley, *Expositio super Librum Praedicamentorum*, fol. b8ra–c1vb, with Buridan, *Summulae in Praedicamenta*, 3.1–3.1.4, 7–14, and *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, qq. 1–2, 3–13.

[29] See Buridan, *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, q. 1, 4, ll. 45–46.

[30] See Burley, *Expositio super Librum Praedicamentorum*, fol. c2ra: "Mihi tamen videtur quod hec divisio sit in membra communia tam rebus quam vocibus, quia tam in vocibus quam in rebus reperiuntur complexum et incomplexum." For Buridan's criticism, see *Summulae in Praedicamenta*, 3.1.5, 14–15.

be differentiated according to the modes of predicating instead of according to the modes of being.[31]

2.2.2. *Buridan and Burley on the Distinction of the Category of Relation*
The second case noted above concerns the real distinction of the category of relation. Some of the arguments given by Buridan to prove the real distinction of the category of relation are similar to those employed by Burley. Among others, Buridan reports the "argument of the intension and remission", the "argument of multiplication", and the "argument of causality". Leaving aside the last two arguments (which basically insist on that a substance can continue to exist while acquiring and losing relational forms, so a relational item cannot be reduced to a substantial item), which do not play any remarkable role in Burley's reasoning,[32] the first argument says that the intension/remission of a foundational form (i.e. the form that is the foundation of a relation) is in inverse proportion to the intension/remission of the relational form. For example, if Socrates is white and Plato is white, when the whiteness of Socrates increases in intensity, Socrates's similarity to Plato inversely decreases in intensity. For Burley, this is a proof that Socrates's similarity to Plato cannot be reduced to Socrates's whiteness.[33]

For Buridan, this is not true.[34] Buridan's counterargument is logical rather than metaphysical. If one holds that similarity is not different from whiteness (one could grant it or, at least, one could concede that similarity essentially depends on whiteness), it follows that if Socrates's whiteness increases in intensity, Socrates's similarity also increases in intensity. But from that it does not follow that if Socrates's whiteness increases in intensity, for this reason Socrates's similarity to Plato as well increases in intensity. In other words, there is a generic relationship between Socrates's whiteness and Socrates's similarity to Plato (since whiteness is a necessary condition for similarity to occur), but not a one-to-one causal correspondence. Buridan gives the example of a man who is a cleric: if the man is good, it also follows that the cleric is good, but from this it does not

[31] See Buridan, *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, q. 3, 17–19, ll. 89–130.
[32] See Buridan, *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, q. 10, 69–76, arg. 2–3 and 7, and ad 2–3 and ad 7.
[33] See Burley, *Expositio super Librum Praedicamentorum*, fols. e7va–e8ra, where Burley discusses the question "whether relation is the same as its foundation" (*utrum relatio sit eadem cum suo fundamento*).
[34] See Buridan, *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, q. 10, 70, arg. 6.

follow that if this man is a good man, that this man is a good cleric.[35] May we say that Buridan derives such an argument from Burley? It is difficult to answer this question, because neither the order in which such arguments appear in Buridan nor the arguments themselves are exactly the same as they are in Burley. Thus we cannot say whether Buridan was thinking of Burley when he rejected the real distinction of the category of relation by rejecting the "argument of the intension and remission". The impression, however, is that it is precisely Burley who lies behind Buridan's criticism, since Burley seems to be first to employ such an argument consistently.

2.2.3. *Buridan's Views on the Simultaneous Existence of Relatives*

The third case recorded above finally concerns the simultaneous existence of relatives. What does it mean that relatives are naturally simultaneous (*simul natura*), that a father and a son exist at the same time? Traditionally, simultaneous existence is considered one of the properties of relatives. The question is complex and Buridan examines different ways of understanding it. For Buridan, two things are naturally simultaneous if (i) there can be given a time in which both of them exist and (ii) neither of them is the cause of the other one. Buridan thinks that these conditions are necessary but not sufficient for setting relatives apart from the items belonging to the other categories, so his provisional conclusion is that it is a tricky matter to say what it means for two relatives (and in general for two things) to be naturally simultaneous.[36] In order to better clarify this point, Buridan recalls that some philosophers suggested understanding the property of being naturally simultaneous in terms of cognition. For some interpreters, in particular, to say that two relatives are naturally simultaneous amounts to saying that it is impossible to have the *concept* of a relative without having at the same time the concept of its correlative. For other interpreters, instead, this simply means that it is impossible to have the *definition* of a relative without mentioning its correlative within such a definition.[37] Buridan rejects both these interpretations by stressing that we can know perfectly what a relative is without knowing or referring to its correlative, for example conceiving of a father without

[35] See Buridan, *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, q. 10, 75–76, ad 6.

[36] See Buridan, *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, q. 13, 94–95, ll. 74–78. For Buridan's solution, see 98–99, ll. 166–95.

[37] See Buridan, *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, q. 13, 95, ll. 78–83.

conceiving of a son.[38] The editor of the *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, Johannes Schneider, identifies the interpretations rejected by Buridan with the positions of Walter Burley and William of Ockham, respectively.[39] Schneider is likely right in identifying the second position with that of Ockham. Burley himself criticizes such an explanation of Aristotle's text.[40] Some doubts instead concern the first identification. In fact, Burley does not say that we cannot know a father without knowing a son at the same time, for we can easily define a father without referring to any son (for instance, we can define a father as a man able to generate another man similar in species to him: this is also Buridan's final position about the definition of a relative) or know that someone is a father without knowing the person of whom he is a father. Burley's point is another, more sophisticated, namely that we cannot know what a father is, when a father is taken under the characterization of *father*, without referring to a son.[41] If this is Burley's point, it is difficult to say, again, whether Buridan was really thinking of Burley when he rejects the simultaneous existence of relational concepts or rather he was simply referring to a standard position about the simultaneous knowledge of relatives.[42] Probably, though, it is the strong emphasis put by Burley on the simultaneous knowledge of relatives that leads Buridan to discuss to a large extent this topic.

### 2.2.4. *Conclusion*

The *prima facie* generality and indeterminacy of such realist views about categories and relation, as well as the apparent recurrence of the arguments, are presumably two of the reasons explaining why in two recent books devoted to the philosophy of John Buridan,[43] the name of Burley, except for a quick mention of his treatise on consequences, does not

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[38] See Buridan, *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, q. 13, 95–98, ll. 84–165.

[39] See Buridan, *Quaestiones in Praedicamenta*, q. 13, 95, notes 13 and 14.

[40] See Burley, *Expositio super Librum Praedicamentorum*, fol. f3vb: "Intelligendum quod ex dicto Philosophi, videlicet qui diffinite cognoscit unum relativorum, diffinite cognoscit et reliquum, accipiunt aliqui quod unum relativorum debet diffiniri per reliquum. Et sine dubio istud non est de intentione Philosophi hic."

[41] See Burley, *Expositio super Librum Praedicamentorum*, fol. f3vb: "Dicendum quod aliquis potest cognoscere illum qui est pater non cognoscendo illum qui est filius suus. . . . Nullus tamen potest cognoscere patrem in quantum est pater nisi cognoscat filium suum."

[42] For more on such a debate, see my *La logica di Francesco da Prato* (Florence: 2005), 208–28.

[43] See J.M.M.H. Thijssen and J. Zupko (eds.), *The Metaphysics and Natural Philosophy of John Buridan* (Leiden: 2001); J. Zupko, *John Buridan: Portrait of a Fourteenth Century Arts Master* (Notre Dame, Ind.: 2003).

appear at all. The influence or the presence of Burley in Buridan is not yet well known and this point calls for clarification by contemporary scholarship. Something has been said about Buridan's theory of universals and his criticism to the preceding positions.[44] Here we have seen that behind Buridan's attack on the realist conception of categories in general and of relation in particular probably there is Burley.[45] Much must still be done, however, in order to specify the exact relationship between Buridan and Burley.

### 2.3. *Some Italian Reactions to Burley*

#### 2.3.1. *The Refusal of Burley's Realism of Universals*

For each author and each topic, Burley's influence should be investigated. Nonetheless, we can say that the spread of Burley's philosophy at Paris was important, although few philosophers seem to have endorsed it entirely. But the historian of medieval philosophy can have some difficulties in characterizing such an influence, since some of Burley's typical doctrines overlap with those of other important authors—doctrines that were largely circulating and discussed. For instance, Burley's distinctive doctrine of real propositions displays many similarities with the doctrine of the proposition as a *significabile complexe* elaborated, among others, by Gregory of Rimini and Hugh of Orvieto.[46] In general, a "nominalistic" approach in philosophy seems to have been predominant at Paris, so authors such as Peter Auriol and Gregory of Rimini played a major role. In Italy, things were different. We know that Burley's philosophical writings had a great manuscript circulation.[47] As has been said, Burley's philosophy significantly

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[44] See M. Markowski, "Johannes Buridans Polemik gegen die Universalienlehre des Walter Burleigh," *Medievalia Philosophica Polonorum* 26 (1982), 7–17; "Die Anschauunngen des Walter Burleigh über die Universalien," in *English Logic in Italy in the 14th and 15th Centuries*, ed. A. Maierù (Naples: 1982), 219–29.

[45] For more details on such an issue and on Buridan's views on relation, see R. Schönberger, *Relation als Vergleich: die Relationstheorie des Johannes Buridan im Kontext seines Denken und der Scholastik* (Leiden: 1994).

[46] On the medieval theory of propositions, see Nuchelmans, *Theories of the Proposition*; D. Perler, *Der propositionale Wahrheitsbegriff in 14. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: 1992). On Gregory of Rimini in particular, see M. Dal Pra, "La teoria del 'significato totale' della proposizione nel pensiero di Gregorio da Rimini," *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia* 11 (1956), 287–311. On the notion of "*complexe significabile*", see H. Elie, *Le complexe significabile* (Paris: 1937).

[47] Dr. Marta Vittorini of the University of L'Aquila is preparing a catalogue of the Italian manuscripts of Burley's philosophical works. For a first impression of the large diffusion of Burley's works in Italy, see S. Caroti, "La Biblioteca Malatestiana tra ritorno all'antico e

influenced that of Paul of Venice. We are not yet well acquainted with the fortune of Burley's philosophy before Paul. But one can imagine that the most usual trend is that of reacting to Burley by contrasting his philosophy to that of Aquinas, Scotus, or Ockham. There are philosophical doctrines of Burley that could also be accepted by a Thomist once "depurated" of their excessively realistic features. Especially the first Burley makes use of a vocabulary that was standard at Paris in the first quarter of 14th century and widely shared by the followers of Aquinas (such as Geoffrey of Fontaines or Hervaeus Natalis). Let me give an example of this.

If one considers carefully what we have said above, one can realize that the two theses (T1) and (T2) governing a realistic theory of universals raise different questions. In his treatise on universals, which dates to around 1340, the Dominican Franciscus de Prato sees this and accounts for the problem of universals by distinguishing two fundamental questions.[48] The first question (1) concerns the extramental *being* of universals (i.e. whether universal things exist in the world), while the second question (2) focuses on their extramental *unity* (i.e. granted that universal things exist, whether they have some degree of unity of their own in the extramental world). In the first case, the dispute on universals aims at establishing whether it can be proved that universals have an extramental foundation, in the second case whether arguments can be given to argue for some degree or form of extramental unity of universals. If one says that universals are distinct from particulars—this was one of Ockham's arguments against John Duns Scotus—, one must grant universals a certain degree of real unity. In fact, we cannot say that something *a* is different from something else *b* if before we have not identified both *a* and *b* in themselves.

According to this distinction, Franciscus singles out three different solutions to the two questions mentioned above. The first solution is the realist one. It answers both questions positively. The second solution is that of Ockham. On the contrary, it answers both questions negatively. The third solution finally is that of Thomas Aquinas and Hervaeus Natalis, which instead qualifies the answer: universals have an extramental being, but they fail to have an extramental unity. Franciscus presents the first

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rinnovamento della cultura filosofica e scientifica," in *Il dono di Malatesta Novello. Atti del convegno, Cesena, 21–23 marzo 2003*, ed. L. Righetti and D. Savoia (Cesena: 2006), 91–117.

48 See F. Amerini, *I trattati "De universalibus" di Francesco da Prato e Stefano da Rieti (Secolo XIV)* (Spoleto: 2003). On Franciscus de Prato's life and works, see F. Amerini, "La *quaestio* 'Utrum subiectum in logica sit ens rationis' e la sua attribuzione a Francesco da Prato. Note sulla vita e gli scritti del domenicano Francesco da Prato (XIV secolo)," *Memorie Domenicane* n.s. 30 (1999), 147–217.

position as anonymous, but the 26 arguments that he gives are taken for the most part from Burley's prologue to the late exposition on the *Physics* and from Scotus's works. The conflation of Scotus's and Burley's arguments shows that for some philosophers the most important legacy of Burley to medieval philosophy is that of having corroborated Scotus's views and codified a set of recurrent arguments (most of the arguments selected by Franciscus, for example, also occur in John Sharpe's *Quaestio super universalia* and in Wyclif's *Treatise on universals*). If we take Franciscus expressing correctly Burley's and Scotus's fundamental intuition about universals (i.e. the idea that universals have some sort or degree of mind-independent unity), we may still allow labeling the proposal of Burley as "exaggerated realism". The unity of universals outside the mind could be seen as the hallmark of Burley's account of universals and, in opposition to Aquinas's account, as the distinctive feature of Scotus–Burley "exaggerated realism". The same conclusion reached by Franciscus is drawn by some contemporary scholars as well: "The theory of extra-mental universals characteristic of Burley is thus based on a theory of identity. Because universals are assigned a type of identity different from that of individuals, a universal can be recognized as actually existing as one and the same universal in each of many individuals. It follows that, on this theory by contrast with the preceding one, no mode of being other than actual being is required to ensure that universals have extra-mental being as universals."[49]

Without entering into the details of Franciscus's arguments, it is clear that Franciscus sees Burley's final position as essentially the same as Scotus's. The shared feature of Burley's and Scotus's ontology is the idea that universals are endowed with a certain degree of real unity of their own, namely independently of the activity of the mind that, while gathering the features of the things, unifies them.[50] The arguments given by Burley to prove that universals have a real unity are various. In the commentary on the *Categories*, as has been said, Burley argues for the nonreducibility of relations to their foundations by stating that no form can undergo opposite processes of intension and remission. But this would happen if a relational form were the same as its foundation. In the commentary on the *Physics*, by contrast, Burley especially insists that some

[49] See Karger, "Walter Burley's Realism," *Vivarium* 37.1 (1999), 36.

[50] Obviously, this overlapping can be disputed. For a fine description of the difference between Scotus's and Burley's account of universals, with respect especially to categories, see G. Pini, "Scotus's Realist Conception of the Categories: His Legacy to Late Medieval Debates," *Vivarium* 43.1 (2005), 63–110, esp. 107–10.

processes or actions (such as promises, volitions, or "intentional" acts of nature, like generation) are oriented towards a universal target. Such arguments are those that Franciscus records in his treatise on universals,[51] which an anonymous philosopher will propose again during a disputed question held in Paris in 1363,[52] and which John Sharpe will list many years later in his question on universals.[53]

Franciscus seems to consider Ockham's criticism compelling. If we have two things *a* and *b*, either they are really the same or they are really different. In the first case, they are exactly the same thing, so that whatever can be predicated of one of them can be predicated of the other as well. In the second case, instead, they are different things, so that in principle nothing prevents us from separating one of them from the other, since real distinction must be understood as a symmetrical relation. At the same time, Franciscus has some reasons for dismissing Ockham's answer as well, but it is not necessary to consider them here. Worth noting, instead, is that Franciscus sees Burley's account of universals as (i) essentially the same as Scotus's, as we said, insofar as Scotus's formal distinction is explained as a kind of real distinction, and as (ii) essentially different from Aquinas's account of universals—at least from Aquinas's account as reconstructed by Hervaeus Natalis. The distinctive feature of Hervaeus's account of universals is that the mind plays a chief role in unifying the properties exhibited by extramental things. Extramental reality cannot be reduced to a class of absolutely simple and unrelated things. There are properties that cannot be explained in terms of things' particularity, or in terms of the mind's reactions to particular things. Nonetheless, there are properties that only the mind is able to single out by comparing things to each other.[54] Therefore, Franciscus is of the opinion that the best answer to the problem of universals is that of admitting first, that some universal properties are remotely rooted in the extramental world, and second, that

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[51] See Franciscus de Prato, *Tractatus de universalibus*, a. 3, ed. Amerini, 80–84 (the arguments are nn. 14b–26b). Note that some of these arguments also recur in Henry of Harclay's *Quaestio de universali*.

[52] This question, which is presented as the prologue question of a commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, has been edited by Martin Grabmann. See M. Grabmann, *Quaestio de universali secundum viam et doctrinam Guillelmi de Ockham* (Münster: 1930). The question makes extensive use of Franciscus's treatise.

[53] See John Sharpe, *Quaestio super universalia*, ed. Conti, 24ff., and 63–65.

[54] For details on Hervaeus Natalis's account of universals, I take the liberty of referring to my introduction to the edition of Franciscus's treatise. Also see F. Amerini, "What is Real. A Reply to Ockham's Ontological Program," *Vivarium* 43.1 (2005), 187–212.

nonetheless they cannot be really distinct or separate, if not with the aid of the mind, from the particulars that instantiate them.

Unfortunately, Franciscus's replies to Burley's arguments are almost entirely lost. Only three remain. But the strategy of Franciscus is clear and consists in differentiating the questions of being and unity of universals. This is the same line followed by many English philosophers. Consider, for instance, one of Franciscus's arguments in favor of realism, which is the 14th argument of his list. According to Franciscus, Burley argues that every action of nature is oriented to producing one single effect. Since nature does not aim at producing one rather than another effect in particular, but something universal, it follows that some action of nature is oriented to producing one single universal effect.[55] What does Franciscus reply to this? His counterargument is that the nature always produces an effect by means of an action. Accordingly, if the action is numerically one, the effect is also numerically one, while if the nature produces many effects by means of numerically different actions, such effects are also numerically different. But the action that can be universally attributed to many and numerically different real actions can be said to be one only according to reason. Thus it can be said that there exists a universal action outside the mind, but only in the sense that all the numerically different actions of which it can be predicated are of one and the same kind. This is a mind-independent fact. But it cannot be said that such a universal action is one in itself, since it is not numerically different from any particular action that exemplifies it.[56]

### 2.3.2. *The Acceptance of Burley's Propositional Realism*

If Franciscus dismisses all those aspects of Burley's philosophy connected with the realism of universals, there are nonetheless some other aspects that sound attractive to him. Burley's idea that the so-called form of the whole (such as humanity and animality) is something really different from the form of the part (e.g. the soul), for example, is not incompatible with Aquinas's account of universals. One will remember that especially at the end of his career (i.e. in the commentary on the *Metaphysics*), Aquinas rejected Averroes's and the Averroists' suggestion of really identifying the

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[55] See Franciscus de Prato, *Tractatus de universalibus*, a. 3, arg. 14b, 80, ll. 152–63. Burley formulates such an argument in his *In Physicam Aristotelis expositio et quaestiones*, *prol.* (Venice: 1501; repr. Hildesheim: 1972), fol. 7ra.

[56] See Franciscus de Prato, *Tractatus de universalibus*, a. 6, arg. 14d, 130–31, ll. 292–319.

two forms.[57] An Aquinas-inspired philosopher could therefore accept that the two forms are not, strictly speaking, the same form; nonetheless, he would not be disposed to concede, in addition, that the form of the whole is something provided with a certain unity outside the mind, as if it were something separable from the concrete substance and rooted in it.

As was seen, Franciscus departs from Burley and sides with Hervaeus Natalis. As we said, Hervaeus puts a strong emphasis on the role of the mind in unifying the stream of perceptual and cognitive data flowing from the extramental world and in forming universal or abstract objects, such as whiteness, man, or humanity. In the *Treatise on Second Intentions* and in the second *Quodlibet*, both composed during the 1310s, Hervaeus describes such mental objects as the formal correlates of our universal concepts, which are the trails left in our mind when the activity of cognition is over. From a semantic point of view, such objects are said to be the primary or formal meaning of the common terms of any conventional language. Mental objects, moreover, are said to be the subject of the intentional properties expressed by so-called second intentions (such as being a species or being universal). Franciscus and Hervaeus clearly endorse a different form of realism. If, for Burley, the world determines how our language must be made and functions, so that from semantic considerations we can get definite information about how the world is made and functions, Franciscus, in line with Hervaeus, prefers to follow another path. The semantic function of the language only says how things, *qua understood by us*, are and function. There is a strong parallelism between language and the "objective" dimension of reality (i.e. the reality as mentally "reconstructed"), but not between language and extramental reality. This is somehow the result of the sharp distinction between the logical level of language (which involves acts of definition and predication) and the real level of existence. Take again the case of the category of relation. In his commentary on the *Categories*, Burley argues for the difference between the abstract form of paternity, which falls under the category of relation, and its qualitative foundation in the substance. Although paternity is not a man's absolute form,[58] nonetheless it adds something really new

[57] See Thomas Aquinas, *In duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis Expositio*, VII.9, ed. Marietti (Turin: 1964), 358–59, nn. 1467–69. On Burley's distinction between the two forms, see e.g. *Expositio super librum Perihermeneias*, in *Expositio super Artem Veterem Porphyrii et Aristotelis*, fol. b4vb.

[58] See Burley, *Expoxitio super librum Praedicamentorum*, fol. e6ra and e8ra.

to man and its foundation.[59] Franciscus agrees that a relation is not reducible to its foundation, since to have the capacity of generating a son and to have a son amount to really different metaphysical situations. But, he says, in the external reality the only thing that a relation newly adds to its foundation is the extreme of the relation, and this leads us to conclude that in the external reality a relation is not something different from its foundation. Nonetheless, the existence of a really different extreme of the relation enables the mind to compare the father and the son, and hence to isolate the relational form of paternity as a really distinct item from a man's capacity of having a son.[60]

For Franciscus, it is difficult to find a point of accord with the "second" Burley, but it is easier to find it with the "first" Burley. As to the case of relation, the early Burley nuanced the real distinction of relation from its foundation, but more importantly, he insisted on the importance of the objective dimension of the things in the mind as the clue to solve the vexed question of universals and categories distinction. In particular, connected to the topic of the objective or intramental existence of the things, there is a doctrine of Burley that had great fortune in Italy and which Franciscus himself takes up. It is Burley's idea that there exist propositions that are composed of things. Franciscus completely subscribes to such a thesis.

It is not clear whether Burley changed his mind about the nature of real propositions, namely whether the "second" Burley treated a real proposition as an extramental state of affairs or, as early in his career, he considered a real proposition simply a mental combination of things *qua* understood.[61] The theme of objective being is not an original feature of Burley's philosophy, but the emphasis that Burley puts on it influenced the following philosophers. This topic was introduced by Henry of Ghent and deeply developed by Duns Scotus. But the fortune of this topic is often associated with the name of Burley. This is a subject matter to

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[59] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Praedicamentorum*, fols. e7va–e8rb. Burley does not see any problem in admitting an infinite composition of relational forms in a man. This usually happens in the case of quantity (fol. e6rb–va).

[60] See Franciscus de Prato, *Questio disputata "Utrum relatio creature ponat in fondamento aliquid reale differens realiter a fundamento"*, MS Siena, Biblioteca Comunale degl'Intronati, G.VII.40, fols. 245v–246r.

[61] In a passage from his late commentary on the *Categories*, Burley seems to exclude that a proposition in the world is equivalent to what contemporary philosophers indicate by "state of affairs". He speaks of a copulated thing (*ens copulatum*) instead of a copulation of things as the correlate of a real proposition (fol. g 8 ra–b). Nonetheless Burley clearly differentiates a real proposition from an objective proposition (fol. h 2 rb).

which Burley returns several times across his career. Already in the early *Quaestiones in librum Peryermeneias* (1301) Burley spent a lot of time to discussing the question of the signification of names (q. 1) and that of the composition of the proposition (q. 3), and this tells us that such issues were widely discussed at the end of 13th century. Answering the first question, Burley establishes the semantic principle that he maintains across his career: a common name signifies primarily a passion of the soul and a passion is "the thing itself insofar as it is able to move the intellect".[62] With this principle in mind, Burley answers the second question. His answer is complicated, but Burley's basic intuition about propositions in the mind is clear: when uttering a mental proposition, the intellect is combining things with each other.[63] Since Burley denies that a proposition can be composed of extramental things,[64] it follows that the things that compose the proposition in the mind are things *qua* understood. In other words, a real proposition is only a subjective act of mentally predicating real things *qua* present objectively to the mind.[65]

Burley formulates the same doctrine in the middle commentary on *Peryermeneias*, which dates to around 1310.[66] In this work, Burley is quite

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[62] See Burley, *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*, q. 1, ed. in S.F. Brown, "Walter Burley's *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*," *Franciscan Studies* 34 (1974), 200–95, at 211–12, § 1.7: "Ideo dicendum sicut dicit Ammonius *hic* supra illud Philosophi 'Voces sunt notae earum passionum quae sunt in anima,' quod passio quantum ad propositum tripliciter potest sumi. . . . Tertio modo sumitur passio pro ipsa re ut nata est movere intellectum, et sic sumendo passionem voces significant passiones, quia nihil aliud est significare passionem isto modo quam significare rem ut est proportionata intellectui. Et isto modo quaelibet vox significat passionem."

[63] See Burley, *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*, q. 3, 249, § 3.553: "Circa enunciationem in mente sciendum quod ista componitur ex rebus quas intellectus asserit esse eadem vel diversa. Si enim intellectus asserat voces esse easdem, talis enunciatio componitur ex vocibus. Et si asserat res extra animam esse easdem, talis enunciatio componitur ex rebus extra animam. Unde cum voces prolatae significent passiones animae, ut communiter dicitur, et passiones animae significent res extra, oportet concedere quod tandem sit deveniendum ad aliquid quod sic est significatum quod non significans."

[64] See Burley, *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*, q. 3, 247, § 3.541: "Si enunciatio componeretur ex rebus extra animam haec esset vera 'Subiectum bibit praedicatum,' quia per istam positionem verae res extra animam praedicantur et subiiciuntur"; also 250, § 3.554: "Ulterius est intelligendum quod propositio in mente non componitur ex rebus compositione reali sicut domus componitur ex lignis et lapidibus, sed solum est ibi compositio intellectualis quae fit ex hoc quod intellectus intelligit aliqua esse eadem vel diversa."

[65] See Burley, *Quaestiones in librum Perihermeneias*, q. 3, 252, § 3.623; 260, §§ 3.820–2.

[66] See Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, §§ 1.02–03, ed. in S.F. Brown, "Walter Burley's Middle Commentary on Aristotle's *Perihermeneias*," *Franciscan Studies* 33 (1973), 42–134, at 45: "oratio in mente componitur ex rebus quas intellectus componit ad invicem vel dividit ab invicem, sive illae res sint voces sive res significatae per voces. . . . Et

explicit in saying that a real proposition is a special (i.e. objective) kind of mental proposition.[67] Although expressed with a slightly different terminology, Burley essentially reaffirms the same doctrine, while referring to his earlier formulations, in the late *Scriptum super Artem Veterem* (1337). What is no longer present is Burley's reference to objective being.[68] But many other aspects are confirmed: first, that a real predication is none other than an intellectual composition; second, that the copula does not refer to anything distinct outside the mind, but it simply serves a mental connecting function (*compositio intellectualis*); there is however something that corresponds to it in the outer world, namely the identity or diversity of the extremes of the proposition, although Burley is not clear about what metaphysical status such an identity has; third, that the subject and the predicate are the material element of the proposition, while the copula is the formal element.[69] The arguments that Burley elaborates in the *Scriptum* to prove the existence of real propositions are not entirely convincing, since Burley often shifts from proving that a (mental) proposition can be composed of real things to proving that there exists a real proposition outside the mind. Nonetheless, such arguments reaffirm Burley's anti-Ockham conviction that it is more accurate to explain the

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quod oratio in mente componitur ex rebus patet per Commentatorem, VI *Metaphysicae*, in fine, qui dicit quod entia vera, cuiusmodi sunt propositiones, facta sunt ab intellectu quando dividit ea ab invicem vel componit ea ad invicem. Ex quo patet quod propositio in mente componitur ex rebus quas intellectus componit ad invicem vel dividit ab invicem."

[67] See Burley, *Commentarius in librum Perihermeneias*, § 1.26, 61: "Ad istud dicendum quod in intellectu est duplex propositio: Una quae efficitur ab intellectu et habet esse subiectivum in intellectu, et talem propositionem vocat Philosophus ens verum. Alia est propositio quae solum habet esse obiectivum in intellectu. . . . Sub aliis verbis: Possumus dicere quod quaedam est propositio in re et quaedam in intellectu, appellando illam propositionem quae solum habet esse obiectivum in intellectu propositionem in re et aliam quae habet esse subiectivum in intellectu propositionem in intellectu."

[68] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Praedicamentorum*, fol. b6va: "Ad illud dubium recolo me dixisse et in scriptis relinquisse quod intellectus potest facere propositionem ex quibuscumque, intellectus potest asserere illa esse eadem vel diversa, quia propositio non est aliud quam compositio aliquorum per intellectum ad invicem. . . . Quecumque ergo intellectus potest componere ad invicem aut dividere ab invicem possunt esse partes orationis; . . . sed intellectus potest ad invicem componere res asserendo illas esse easdem . . . Et ideo aliqua propositio componitur ex rebus extra animam"; and fol. l4vb: "Ergo in rebus est aliquid compositum cuius subiectum est res et predicatum similiter, quod dicitur propositio in re."

[69] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Praedicamentorum*, fol. b7va–b. On the semantics of terms and propositions, also see *Expositio super librum Perihermeneias*, fols. k6va–k7rb; k7vb; and k8va, for a clear affirmation of the correspondence between true affirmative and negative propositions and the identity or diversity of things in the extramental world.

semantics of propositions in terms of things signified rather than in terms of acts of signifying things.

Hervaeus Natalis also distinguished the subjective and the objective dimension of our mental propositions, but he never argued for a theory of real propositions. Nonetheless, the doctrinal similarities between the "first" Burley and Hervaeus explains why Franciscus de Prato incorporates Burley's doctrine of real propositions in his philosophy—in opposition to Ockham's account of mental proposition as a combination of acts of understanding taking the place of extramental things. Quite interestingly, Franciscus connects Burley's doctrine with the more popular doctrine of the *complexe significabile*, which was championed in the same years at Paris by Gregory of Rimini and at Oxford by Adam Wodeham. The great alternative with which Franciscus is confronted is that of describing a mental proposition as a combination of signifying signs or as a combination of signified things. Some passages of Franciscus's works clearly show the influence of Burley on him.[70]

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[70] See e.g. Franciscus de Prato, *Logica*, 1, tr. 1, c. 1, ed. F. Amerini (Florence: 2005), 252, ll. 16–24: "Quedam vero est propositio obiectiva, que non est aliud quam obiectum complexum, sive intelligibile complexum sive significatum complexum sive significabile complexum. Nam illud obiectum quod intelligitur per secundam operationem intellectus (que secunda operatio vocatur ab Aristotele 'compositio vel divisio', idest actus componens vel dividens, sive actus enuntiativus et predicativus) et quod significatur per propositionem vocalem et per propositionem scriptam, vocatur 'propositio obiectiva', in qua predicatur obiectum de obiecto"; 256, ll. 110–15: "Quintum correlarium est quod, cum propositio obiectiva sit obiectum complexum ex duobus obiectis, que sunt predicatum et subiectum, que componunt et integrant propositionem obiectivam, tunc in tali propositione obiectiva predicatur res de re quando propositio componitur ex obiectis realibus, sicut est hec 'homo est animal' vel 'homo est albus' et sic de similibus"; 256–57, ll. 128–57: "Sextum correlarium est quod verius et magis proprie invenitur predicari unum de altero in propositione obiectiva quam in propositione vocali vel scripta. Pro quo est sciendum quod sicut in actione aliqua transeunte realiter est aliquid per se movens tantum, in aliquo ordine, et aliquid movens et motum, et aliquid motum tantum (puta si homo moveat lapidem mediante baculo, in tali ordine, homo est movens, baculus est movens et motus, set lapis tantum est motus), ita in actione transeunte intentionaliter, qualis est predicatio, est aliquid quod est tantum predicans, et aliquid predicans et predicatum, et aliquid quod est tantum predicatum: predicans tantum est ipse homo, qui format vocem; predicans et predicatum est ipsa vox; predicatum tantum est ipsa res extra: homo enim predicat rem mediante voce. Et sicut si aliquis vellet proprie loqui, diceret quod lapis est ille qui movetur, baculus vero est ille quo mediante lapis movetur, pro quanto homo movet lapidem mediante baculo, ita, proprie loquendo de predicatione, debet dici quod res est illa que predicatur, vox vero illa qua mediante res predicatur, pro quanto non predicat rem aliquis nisi mediante voce. Et nichilominus, sicut potest vere dici quod in motione lapidis etiam baculus movetur, ita etiam potest vere dici quod in predicatione rei de re etiam vox predicatur de voce, puta quando homo predicat rem mediante voce. Patet etiam hoc correlarium ex significato vocabuli, quia 'predicari' est idem quod 'dici', ut vult Aristoteles, I *Priorum*, cum predicatum sit illud quod de altero dicitur. Set certum est quod non solum vox dicitur,

Formulations such as those quoted in the previous footnote are clearly extracted from or at least inspired by Burley's works. Franciscus's reference moreover bears witness to the persistence of the debate on real propositions, given that already the early Burley recorded a position according to which "there is something that only enunciates, something that enunciates and is enunciated, and something that is only enunciated".[71] Unlike in the case of Buridan, it is an easier matter for the historian of medieval philosophy to establish whether there is Burley behind Franciscus's theory of real proposition, since, as has been seen, Franciscus shows to be deeply acquainted with Burley's realism of terms and propositions, as evinced by his *Treatise on Universals*. The influence of Burley on some Italian thinkers seems to be significant and, as has been said, it has its culmination with Paul of Venice, who fully restates Burley's realism.[72]

### 3. *Burley's Realism and the Nature of Supposition*[73]

In the previous sections, we have presented some reactions to Burley's realism. Our focus has been on the problem of universals. A second point we have chosen in order to assess Burley's influence is the theory of supposition. The account of supposition and its division strongly depends upon the answer a philosopher gives to the question on universals.[74]

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set etiam res dicitur, narratur et recitatur. Sicut ergo res est que intelligitur, ita res est illa que mediante voce explicatur, recitatur et predicatur. Et illamet res, que absolute intelligitur ab intellectu per primam operationem, potest enuntiari et predicari ab intellectu per secundam operationem. Inde ergo concludo quod in propositione obiectiva predicatur res de re mediante secunda operatione intellectus, que est unus actus simpliciter in se, et mediante voce complexa, que est propositio vocalis, et mediante script<ur>a complexa, que est propositio scripta."

[71] Burley introduces the doctrine of real proposition as the second thing that substantially clashes with what is endorsed by the "modern philosophers" (*moderni*): "Secundum contrarium modernis est quod propositio componitur ex rebus extra animam; nam illud quod dicitur de subiecto et non est in subiecto predicatur in propositione et illud est res extra animam" (*Expositio super librum Praedicamentorum*, fol. c2va). See also below, note 75.

[72] See A.D. Conti, "Alcune note sulla *Expositio super Universalia Porphyrii et Artem Veterem Aristotelis* di Paolo Veneto: Analogie e differenze con i corrispondenti commenti di Walter Burley," in *English Logic in Italy in the 14th and 15th Centuries*, ed. A. Maierù (Naples: 1982), 293–303, and more extensively A.D. Conti, *Esistenza e verità: Forme e strutture del reale in Paolo Veneto e nel pensiero filosofico del tardo medioevo* (Rome: 1996).

[73] See also above, the second and third chapters of this volume, 79–81 and 101–19.

[74] On the relationship between theory of universals and theory of supposition, see M.F. Wagner, "Supposition-Theory and the Problem of Universals," *Franciscan Studies* 41 (1981), 385–414.

Supposition theory furnishes the logical tools for a correct description of the truth-conditions of standard linguistic propositions. But one must already have in mind an image of how the world is made in order to build a consistent and well-working theory of supposition. On the other hand, the theory of supposition helps to define accurately the realist involvement of Burley's metaphysics. To give just one example, in the late commentary on the *Categories*, when commenting on Chapter 5, Burley asks whether a secondary substance is or is not a substance. His answer is that both the following propositions are true: "no substance is a secondary substance" and "some substance is a secondary substance", if the subject-term is taken as having different suppositions. Thus the first sentence is true if "substance" has personal supposition, while the second sentence is true if "substance" has simple supposition. This is a subtle logical way of saying that, although a secondary substance exists outside the mind,[75] it does not exist outside the mind separately of a primary substance; properly speaking, a secondary substance can exist only in the mind. Burley expresses an anti-Platonic assumption by way of the vocabulary of supposition. This example shows the interconnection between Burley's theory of supposition and theory of universals, and how careful Burley was to differentiate his own position from that of Plato.

The connection between the theory of supposition and the theory of universals is made explicit, among others, by the Spanish Dominican Vincent Ferrer, who composed a *Treatise on Supposition* in ca. 1372. At the very beginning of the treatise, Ferrer recalls that there are two main opinions about universals, from which two different accounts of supposition basically ensue. The first is that of Ockham, while the second one is that of Burley. On Ferrer's account, Ockham denies that universals exist outside the mind, while Burley thinks that the opposite case is true. Ferrer states that he wants to follow a third way, namely that of Aquinas, who simply grants universals an extramental foundation.[76] It is not important here to go into the details of Ferrer's theory of supposition. For our argument, it is sufficient to note two things. The first is that when Ferrer portrays Burley's

[75] The existence of secondary substances outside the mind is the first thing that clashes with what is endorsed by the "modern philosophers" (*moderni*): "ex divisione hac apparent duo contraria dictis modernorum. Primum est quod universalia de genere substantie sunt extra animam, quia illud quod dicitur de subiecto et non est in subiecto est universale de genere substantie" (*Expositio super Librum Praedicamentorum*, fol. c2 rb–va). See also above, note 71.

[76] See Vincent Ferrer, *Tractatus de suppositionibus*, ed. J.A. Trentman (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: 1977), 87–88.

theory of universals, he has in mind a stereotyped image of it. Burley is seen as the advocate of the extramental existence of universal entities. This seems to be the role that the tradition assigns to Burley in the history of the problem of universals. The second thing is that, despite the heavy realist ontology underlying his theory of supposition, a long series of logicians nonetheless inherits from Burley the division of supposition. As is known, in opposition to Ockham, Burley renews William of Sherwood's fundamental bipartition of supposition into formal and material. Burley combines such bipartite division, which does not overlap perfectly with Peter of Spain's threefold division of supposition, with the distinction between formal and material signification of terms (a distinction that Burley relates to the division of the formal supposition into simple and personal supposition). In outline: for Burley, a term can have either formal or material supposition; a term has material supposition when it stands for itself or for something similar to it while not being categorially subordinated to it, whereas the term has formal supposition when it stands for its signification; in particular, when a term stands for its formal or primary signification (i.e. for a universal form), it has simple supposition, while when it stands for its secondary or material signification (i.e. for each singular bearer of the universal form), it has personal supposition.

Ockham preferred explaining supposition in a different way: a term basically has personal, simple, or material supposition according to whether it stands for a real thing, an intention of the mind, or a spoken or written word, respectively. A comparison between Ockham's and Burley's division of supposition makes clear that the main point of disagreement is the nature of simple supposition, for when a term has simple supposition, according to Ockham, it is taken not significantly (*non significative*), while according to Burley, it stands for its primary signification. Ockham's description of simple supposition raises two questions: first, how is it possible for a term to stand for what it does not signify, and how is it possible to differentiate simple from material supposition, if in both cases terms are not taken significantly? Second, what is the metaphysical nature of the thing for which a term stands when it has simple supposition? Leaving aside the first question,[77] the second question clearly follows the way in which one is disposed to solve the problem of universals. Ockham's answer

[77] For a discussion of this point, see F. Amerini, "Some Notes on Later Medieval Supposition Theory," to be published in the proceedings of the *17th European Symposium for Medieval Logic and Semantics*, held in Leiden (The Netherlands), 2–6 June 2008.

to the second question, in particular, is that an intention of the mind is a sort of quality existing subjectively in the mind that is not actually different from an act of cognition; Thomas Aquinas and Burley, instead, hold that such an intention is a universal form, essentially different from and posterior to an act of cognition. As is obvious, Burley's account of supposition becomes the touchstone for any realist account of universals.

Ockham's explanation of supposition had its own supporters. Nikolas Drukken from Denmark, for instance, is one of them.[78] But historically speaking, Burley's proposal seems to be the most followed path. In Italy, Burley's account of supposition is strictly followed by Franciscus de Prato, who composes a treatise on supposition at the end of 1330s.[79] Later, during the 1410s, Paul of Venice reappraises the entire medieval debate concerning supposition and in essence he does not depart from the division of supposition as presented by Burley. At the same time, Paul of Venice rejects once more Ockham's explanation of simple supposition with arguments which are not so far from those of Franciscus.[80] Burley's explanation of supposition finally is followed by Girolamo Savonarola in his handbook of logic of 1484.[81] Ockham's idea that a term has simple and material supposition when it is not taken significantly (for otherwise it has personal supposition) raised many discussions. In England, Richard Brinkley, for example, is sympathetic to Burley and attacks Ockham by insisting on the same point as Franciscus of Prato in his *Treatise on Supposition*: according to Ockham's division, it is impossible to account for simple supposition.[82] Already Richard Campsall rejected the position of those who denied that a term can signify itself and for this reason Campsall argued that Ockham's account of simple and material supposition was highly inaccurate.[83] The situation is not particularly different at Paris,

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[78] See Nicolaus Drukken, *Tractatus de suppositionibus*, §§ 1–5, ed. S. Ebbesen, in Nicolai Drukken de Dacia *Opera* (Copenhagen: 1997), 235, ll. 1–19.

[79] See F. Amerini, "Il trattato 'De suppositionibus terminorum' di Francesco da Prato O. P. Una rilettura della dottrina ockhamista del linguaggio," *Medioevo* 25 (1999/2000), 441–550.

[80] See Paul of Venice, *Tractatus de suppositionibus*, 1.2, 1.9, 2.1–2.3, 2.20, 3.1, 3.8ff., ed. A.R. Perreiah (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: 1971), 4, 16–20, 42–44, 76–80, 80–84, and 88.

[81] See Girolamo Savonarola, *Compendium logicae*, X, 12, ed. G. Garfagnini and E. Garin, *Scritti filosofici*, vol. 1 (Rome: 1982).

[82] See e.g. Richard Brinkley, *Logica*, II (*De universalibus*) § 33, ed. L. Cesalli, *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 19 (2008), 310, ll. 319–25.

[83] See Richard of Campsall, *Logica*, I, c. 50 and 51, ed. E.A. Synan, in *Nine Medieval Thinkers: A Collection of Hitherto Unedited Texts*, ed. J.R. O'Donnell (Toronto: 1955), 198–99 and 200–03.

although Burley's account of supposition had a minor impact. Like Franciscus de Prato and Richard Campsall, Gerald Odonis as well emphasizes the strong connection between supposition and signification, explaining the division of supposition essentially in the same way as Burley.[84] But at Paris the minor impact of Burley's theory is due to the opposition of John Buridan. As to the question of the nature of simple supposition, for instance, we must recall that Buridan rejects Ockham's account, since a term standing for what it does not properly signify can have only material supposition. But at the same time Buridan also opposes to the idea that a term having simple supposition can stand for a universal thing. Buridan's reason is that Aristotle has convincingly shown, in the seventh book of the *Metaphysics*, that no universal thing can exist alongside singular things.[85] Buridan's solution to the problem of universals, therefore, ensured a generally minor interest in Burley's theory of supposition.

## 4. *Concluding Remarks*

As we have said, the major difficulty the historian of medieval philosophy encounters in singling out Burley's influence on later medieval philosophy is due to the fact that Burley reconnects to a well-established tradition of realist thought. Although Burley introduces into the debate on universals many original arguments and reformulates old questions under new clothes, Burley's nuances and subtle distinctions tend to be quickly lost and Burley turns out to be portrayed as the major advocate (together with Scotus) of a naive and "exaggerated", more or less Platonic, realism in philosophy. In reality, however, Burley differentiated his position from the Platonic one and finally seemed to prefer reconnecting himself to the philosophical tradition of realism deriving from Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas rather than to that ensuing from Scotus or, worst, Plato. In the commentary on Gilbert's *Liber sex Principiorum*, for example, Burley consistently uses Albert's commentary as the main source of his own exposition. When he is called to explain the difference between the universals of natural substances and those of artifacts, Burley rephrases Albert's division of

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[84] See Giraldus Odonis, *Tractatus de suppositionibus*, §§ 1.11–1.12, ed. S.F. Brown, *Franciscan Studies* 35 (1975), 13.

[85] See e.g. Buridan, *Summulae de suppositionibus*, 4.3.2, ed. R. Van der Lecq (Nijmegen: 1998), 38, l. 21–39, l. 8. For a similar criticism, see also Albert of Saxony, *Logica*, II, c. 2, ed. Venice, 1522.

universals in *ante rem*, *in re*, and *post rem*.[86] The renewing and updating of an old-fashioned and for the most part pre-Ockhamist realist view of universals is one of the possible reasons for explaining the deep and persistent impact of Burley's philosophy. Another reason is given by the "air of family" that Burley's realism could share with Aquinas's. If a philosopher were to rewrite Burley's philosophy with two caveats in mind—namely first, that universals, while existing outside the mind, must not be regarded as separate or separable from their particular instantiations, and second, that every universal feature Burley attributes to extramental reality (such as the existence of real propositions or abstract forms) must be understood as referred to extramental reality *qua* reconstructed by our mind—then she/he would be reconciling Burley with Aquinas. Such harmonization rests upon an anti-Scotus and especially anti-Ockham constraint. Although Aquinas's and Burley's answers to the problem of universals are actually very different, there are nonetheless some places where Burley himself recognizes that there are similarities between Aquinas's metaphysics and his own. This does not mean that Burley's metaphysics can be traced back to Aquinas's, but only that Burley shows to be interested in siding Aquinas with him. To conclude, let me cite a pair of cases.

(i) When commenting on the starting lines of Aristotle's *Peryermeneias*, Burley lists three different ways of explaining why the passions of the soul (*passiones animae*) are said to be primary in signification. The third explanation, which Burley considers as the best one, is the traditional (i.e. Boethian) interpretation, which was endorsed by Aquinas, among others: the passions of the soul signify the extramental things directly and immediately, while the terms of the language signify the extramental things only by way of the passions of the soul.[87]

(ii) Later on, when commenting on Chapter 9 of the *Peryermeneias*, Burley points out that there Aristotle divides, into universal and particular, extramental things rather than terms or things *qua* signified by terms of the language. Burley observes that modern philosophers do not like

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[86] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Perihermenias*, fol. h7vb. For a first evaluation of the relationship between Burley and Albert the Great, see E.A. Synan, "Albert and the Two Burleys: Citations and Allusions," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 70 (1996), 157–77.

[87] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Perihermeneias*, fol. k7vb: "Et intelligo quod passiones anime sunt prime in significando quia immediate significant res quarum sunt similitudines, et nomina et verba non significant res immediate sed mediantibus passionibus anime. Et hec expositio tertia videtur mihi melior dictum."

such an exposition,[88] but it is the right one. In that place Burley quotes Aquinas as supporting his own interpretation.[89]

We could give other cases, but these are sufficient to show why Burley's realism, except for his emphasis on the real distinction between universals and particulars, would be accepted by Thomists as well. Despite their evident differences, philosophers interested in reconciling Burley with Aquinas tend to attenuate such an emphasis. But this accent is also one of the reasons why a Thomist could accept only a part of Burley's philosophy. As Paul V. Spade observed, "metaphysically, Ockham was a nominalist. For him, talk about universals . . . only makes sense as talk about universal *concepts* in the mind. . . . Burley, by contrast, was a metaphysical realist of some kind or other. For him, talk about species and genera is talk about the *world*."[90] Although "the exact form Burley's realism took is a matter still under discussion",[91] nonetheless it is clear that, historically speaking, Burley has been always sided among the metaphysical realists, while not all the interpreters of Aquinas agree on counting Aquinas as an advocate of realism. This explains why at Paris, where the "linguistic" philosophy of John Buridan was dominant, the fortune of Burley was more limited, while at Oxford and in Italy Burley's philosophy received a warmer welcome.

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[88] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Perihermeneias*, fol. m4va: "Primo potest notari quod extra animam est aliqua res universalis et aliqua singularis. Patet hoc per divisionem rerum. Secundo ex eodem potest notari quod enuntiatio componitur ex rebus que sunt universalia et singularia, et ista sunt extra animam. Et tamen modernis non placent ista notabilia, qui nec ponunt universalia extra animam, nec ponunt propositionem componi ex rebus extra animam."

[89] See Burley, *Expositio super librum Perihermenias*, fol. m5ra: "Et hec est sententia sancti Thome in expositione sua huius libri [seu super hunc librum], qui dicit quod Aristoteles non divisit hic nomina in universale et singulare, sed divisit res, ponendo tamen quod nomen appellativum non significat naturam communem, quia huiusmodi commune non est in rerum natura, ut plurimi dicunt. Potest tunc dici quod illud est nomen appellativum quod convenit pluribus per unum conceptum communem."

[90] See P.V. Spade, "Walter Burley on the Kinds of Simple Supposition," *Vivarium* 37.1 (1999), 42.

[91] See ibid., note 8.

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